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Conservation Bonds:

A Progress Report

"In Washington, interior secretary Walter Hickel has suggested the government sell environment bonds to fight pollution—the way it sells defense bonds to finance wars.

"Hickel said, 'This would be one way every citizen and school child could participate in the battle to save the environment.'"

—a CBS television news item

Given the sixteen-second piece of news noted here as epigraph; taking into account the interest and energy of one of our Iowa readers, Harland Nelson, who professes English at Luther College; seeing the correspondence between the Interior Department and Iowa's second district congressman John Culver—an exchange which in some measure has brought about the introduction into the U. S. Senate of the bill reproduced on these pages—one might think the staff of this *Review* should be pleased, if not complacent, about the widening effects of our spring 1970 editorial [*A Chance to Invest in Survival?*] proposing the issuance of Conservation Bonds. When the Secretary of the Interior himself espouses the idea—and when his department actually takes upon itself the task of drafting a bill to realize that idea—surely the notion that big government is deaf to the wishes of "the little people" (or even "the little magazines") is somewhat undercut. Someone up there *is* listening; someone up there *is* going to attend to our desire to stay alive.

Yet there are political seasons which chill the heart and numb the dream, and for two years the Nixon Administration has flourished in just such a season. By the time you read this, the sensible Secretary quoted above will quite possibly have drifted into another line of work. Just as possibly, the bill to create the machinery for the Conservation Bond plan may die in the Finance Committee of the Senate (and a similar fate may befall whatever companion bill is introduced into the House). And in the meantime, the accelerating destruction of the environment goes on and on and on, while nothing yet persuades us that the Administration can muster the degree of dedication that will solve the problem. As we write this, winter is spilling down out of the north, but it is eternally winter at the White House; San Clemente, Key West, and the Southern Strategy have done nothing to temper the climate there.

We hope we may be forgiven our cynicism (or our pessimism, if that's what is really creeping into these

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91ST CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4050

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 1, 1970

Mr. STEVENS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To authorize the issuance of United States conservation savings bonds in order to afford an opportunity for the people of the United States, through the purchase of such bonds, to participate in the financing of programs to conserve and improve the Nation's environment.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That a new section 22B be added to the Second Liberty Bond Act to read as follows:

"SEC. 22B. (a) In addition to the United States savings bonds, and retirement and savings bonds authorized to be issued under sections 22 and 22A of this Act, respectively, the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to issue, from

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lines); it is not to be taken as any sort of disavowal of the modest scheme-for-involvement we proposed nine months ago. That length of time is a perfectly appropriate gestation period for men's hopes, and like any humane parent, we'd like the child to live and be healthy—and we encourage our readers to write their senators on behalf of little S. 4050; may the bill have a million godparents. We still can't pretend that Conservation Bonds are any more than a short first step toward confronting an enormous problem, but we continue to marvel at the ingenuity which helps sell—through all the media—billions of dollars worth of the other bonds which, practically, *do* "finance wars." Such ingenuity ought to be adaptable to the selling of a positive product.

It needs particularly to be kept in mind that the ingenuity of the destroyers becomes itself increasingly more marvelous. An article on the Maine coast, published by *Skipper* magazine, and written by Lawrence S. Hall, remarks on a particularly inventive example. Confronted by Maine shrimp fishermen, who feared that an oil spill might take away their livelihood, one oil company offered a plan that would "provide fishermen with the alternative livelihood of using their boats to help clean up the spills that have wiped them out."

* * *

Not long before the November elections, both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Laird (on separate occasions) paid visits to the city of Green Bay, Wisconsin. So did we, and perhaps our unhappy impressions of that city will prove instructive.

Approaching from the southwest, one is struck first by the ominous and heavy cloud—truly a pall—which overhangs the city. Green Bay is, of course, heavily industrialized, and chief among its industries—not counting the Packers—are a variety of paper mills (Green Bay is, besides other things, headquarters for the Charmin toilet paper people; it is also an "All-American City"). The result is that one is not only gagged by the foul air from uncountable smokestacks, but is assaulted by the stench of pollution in the rivers, where great chunks of effluvia bob and glide.

Two points: First, that it would have been heartening if Mr. Nixon had said a word or two about the salvation of the environment, or if the Interior secretary—not the Defense secretary—had trailed his chief into Green Bay. Second, that it would have been equally heartening had Mr. Nixon paid a visit to the Green Bay branch of the University of Wisconsin—a newish school, experimental, and deliberately organized around the subject of ecology.

Nothing of the sort happened, alas. The city reeks, the ecology school sits small and isolated on the outskirts, and the winter we are beginning to feel outside our office arrived much earlier at Green Bay—spilling not out of Canada, but out of Washington, D. C.

At left and below, a photocopy of the Senate bill, S. 4050, amending the Second Liberty Bond Act to allow the Secretary of the Treasury to issue Conservation Savings Bonds for sale to the public. The bill was drafted by the Interior Department and introduced by Senator Stevens of Alaska; at last reports, it remains in the Finance Committee, and hearings have not yet taken place.

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time to time United States conservation savings bonds, the proceeds of which shall be deposited in the trust fund created by subsection (b) of this section. Conservation savings bonds shall bear such rates of interest, shall be in such forms, shall be offered in such amounts, subject to the overall debt limitation imposed by section 21 of this Act, shall be issued in such manner, and shall be subject to such terms and conditions, including any restrictions on their transfer, as the Secretary of the Treasury may from time to time prescribe.

"(b) There is hereby created within the Treasury of the United States a conservation savings bond trust fund hereinafter referred to as the fund. All proceeds from the sale of conservation savings bonds shall be deposited in the fund. Amounts in the fund are hereby authorized to be appropriated without fiscal year limitation, for expenditures for conservation purposes."

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Iowa Rock / Ohio Campaigning / Blues in Chicago

Iowa

(So far as the editors of the NAR have been able to determine, everyone who attended last summer's rock festival in Wadena, Iowa, found at least some good in the scene—including Iowa's Governor Robert Ray, seen in the photo on page 7—while everyone who did not attend found nothing in the scene but evil. Though it was not much of a festival by Woodstock standards, much of the press and most of the citizenry were exercised and angered by the event; still in litigation is a million-dollar lawsuit filed by the Iowa attorney-general against the festival's producer, Sound Storm, Inc. The account which follows is by a non-writer—a mother, housewife, registered nurse—and we have not presumed to tamper either with the good sense of what she says, or with the way she says it.—Ed.)

Why did I—a mother of four children and a registered nurse—decide to go to a rock festival? This is how it happened.

On a Sunday in July, our family including my parents drove to Galena, Illinois, to visit my husband's parents, and during our visit, the subject of the rock festival came up. My husband's father said Galena had run the promoters out of town. He said, "We sure don't want them; Iowa can have them. I mean all those hippies." (At that time the new site of Wadena, Iowa, had already been chosen for the rock festival.) My husband's mother went on to say that the proprietors of stores in Galena had thought of closing their shops if the festival had stayed in Galena. Jokingly, I said to my father-in-law, "It just might be interesting to go to that rock festival. Wouldn't you like to go with me, Dad?"

"Are you kidding? You must be crazy or out of your mind. Maybe I'd drive by the place, but I sure wouldn't pay fifteen dollars to see a bunch of long-haired hippies."

None of my friends seemed impressed that I would even consider going to such an event, but it was their comments that started me thinking about becoming a part of that famous rock festival. I wondered how my friends could be so narrow-minded about something I felt they really didn't know that much about. I didn't think I really could say too much for or against something I had never been a part of, but if I were to go to the rock festival and be a part of it, then I would know what things were like and could draw my own conclusions. It irritates me when people make statements against something without having actual facts.

A week later on a warm Friday evening, July 31st, I nervously prepared dinner. My heart wasn't there. Earlier in the day I had taken my four youngsters—ages 2 to 7—to see a children's play at the Recreation Center. I had talked to a friend there and when I left I jokingly said, "See you at Wadena!" I still didn't *know* I'd be going, but it was on my mind.

The main topic at the dinner table that evening was the rock festival. I couldn't get the subject out of my mind. My husband, a physician, said some of the doctors had discussed the festival. Some thought they might like to go. A few didn't have the nerve. It was at this point that I decided to make an effort to attend an event that was more or less making Iowa history.

Three hours later my phone calls to Wadena were successful and I was talking to an official of Sound Storm, Inc., promoters of the festival. I volunteered my services as a nurse in the medical tent and was accepted.

I was thrilled, but at the same time felt as if a few butterflies had popped into my stomach. I made arrangements for a baby sitter to come the next day, then made calls to at least ten nurses, hoping to find someone to go with me. I even called my brother, but found no one with enough courage to accompany me. My husband was on call, and was he glad!

I didn't sleep too well that night. I was excited and anxious. I wondered if I should really be doing this—but why not? I had no guilt feelings; I just wanted to be a part of that rock festival, doing my own thing in my own way.

The next morning soon came. I said to my husband, "Do you really mind if I go?"

He said, "Go ahead if you must, but how are you going to stand the music?" With eagerness, yet feeling some concern, I packed my thermos with coffee, a peanut butter sandwich, an apple, and some potato chips, and left.

Exactly one hour and ten minutes later, the road to Wadena was before me. It was my last chance to turn back. I must admit my skin was cold and clammy and my mouth was dry. I was scared. "No," I said to myself, "I'm this far. I *am* going"—never realizing that this was to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

Just ahead of me now were the road blocks and the patrolmen. I fumbled in my purse for the billfold that contained my nursing license. As I approached the patrolman, he was prepared to tell me I had come too far, but when he saw my credentials he directed me to one of the staff, a young fellow named Denny.

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There were hundreds of youths ahead of me on the highway, walking with packs on their backs or carrying sleeping bags. Some walked together, carrying their belongings between them attached to a large stick. Many carried coolers. They stopped along the way to rest and to visit. The mood appeared to be most relaxed, almost lethargic. I assumed I would soon be a part of this pilgrimage, carrying my peanut butter sandwich, chips, and thermos for the three-mile hike to the actual site of the festival. Instead, we were allowed to drive directly to the medical tent.

Denny sat next to me. His blonde shoulder-length hair was neatly arranged under a brown weather-beaten hat that blended well with his hair. He wore blue jeans, sandals, and a clean yellow t-shirt with the word GALENA on the front. He told me he was a "jack-of-all-trades" and worked wherever needed at the festival. His personality was warm, friendly, and sincere. I felt so at ease with him, the butterflies in my stomach were gone. In the short time I visited with him, I learned quite a bit about youth. He seemed to be so understanding and open-minded. He felt that the kids today would just like to be able to communicate more freely with adults. He felt that it could be done if both the adults and kids would just go half-way.

I asked Denny if one called most of the long-haired fellows "hippies." He said "hippies" was the usual term and that most didn't mind being called that. "Some of these kids have come a long way just to be together. Everything is peaceful so far," he said, and he told me, "We really appreciate your interest in the rock festival and the youth. We're very glad you came to help us out."

We passed a farm house and approached a dusty field filled with people and tents. I parked by the medical tent. Ahead in the distance I could see the stage. "This is it," he said. "I'll introduce you to our nurse Mary and be on my way." Mary and I went to a small travel trailer first; this was the supply room containing such medical supplies as gauze bandages, Bandaids, tape, tetanus toxoid, aspirin, vitamin C, salt tablets, and other emergency items. In a corner was an adequate supply of forceps, hemostats, and scissors soaking in a sterilizing solution. There were also sterile suture kits and even an emergency delivery bundle. To say the least, there were enough supplies in that small trailer to take care of almost any emergency that I could foresee. The trailer was also headquarters for two doctors and two nurses from Florida. One of the nurses was resting, as she had been on duty during the night.

Denny introduced me to Billy before he said goodbye. Billy was a negro registered nurse from Cook County Hospital in Chicago. Around his neck was a stethescope. One could tell by watching him that he was devoted to medicine and put all his knowledge to work. He made every movement count and when he said something you knew he believed in it. He moved about the tent taking pulses, blood pressures, temperatures, and gave reassurance to his patients. He gave me a rapid but thorough report on the types of treatment I would be concerned with. Before I could ask any questions, a young man hobbled into the tent. Billy cleansed the foot with a Phisohex solution, looked at the foot, and asked me to get a forceps and hemostat. I couldn't see that there was anything in the wound, but Billy persisted and out came a piece of glass. "I've got it," he said. He was right; his concern impressed me.

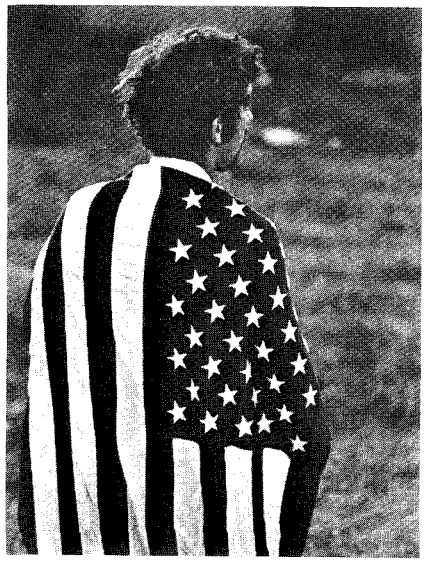
Billy looked very tired so I asked him if he'd like to rest for a while. He said that as soon as I became familiar with the routine, he would take a break. He had been on duty all night, too.

There were volunteers in the tent from various places and various walks of life. Some had been medics in the service, while others had worked in hospitals as psychiatric aids. Some had just stopped by the tent and offered to do anything they could. One of the volunteers was a biology teacher from Chicago who taught in the ghetto. I don't remember his name, but I'll call him Big Bill. He was a chubby fellow and always had a smile and a pleasant word for everybody. He spoke knowingly on the subject of drugs and used words and terms that I had never heard before, such as "speed," "hash," "crashing," "Mary Jane." I asked him how he knew so much about this subject. His reply was, "I learned a lot about drugs from basic sciences, and I teach in the ghetto. You learn to speak the language and recognize the signs." He said, "When I was in college, I used to 'speed' a lot. I took Benzedrine or Dexedrine. I tried L.S.D. once."

I asked him what L.S.D. was like. "The first 4 hours were beautiful," he replied. "There were bright colors flashing before me. The last ten hours were pure hell and agony. I don't intend to try it again. I didn't even have a bad trip like a lot of guys do."

Now I had actually talked to someone who had taken drugs. He was serving humanity the best way he knew. I did not condemn him for what he had done, even though I do not approve of drugs. It was a test for me, but a wonderful feeling to know I could accept a person even though he had done something I disapproved of. Big Bill and I went on with our work. We were friends.

Everyone in the tent worked as a team. If anyone was in doubt about this particular sore toe or that specific cut, another member's opinion was in order. There was no pressure and no tension. The atmosphere was



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friendly and casual. I experienced a togetherness and unity that I shall not soon forget.

I visited with hundreds of youths in the tent while I soaked a foot or applied a Bandaid or bandaged a wound. They always enjoyed talking. I would listen as long as duty permitted. It was my impression from the conversations that most of these kids came to the festival to hear music and communicate with others. Some liked the freedom; it was nice to have a weekend to relax and not be concerned whether other people would be critical of what you did or didn't do. Many came out of curiosity.

There in Wadena was a contrast from my home setting with its own set of values. You could be yourself; you had time to think and enjoy God's country. The setting for this rock festival overlooked the scenic Volga River Valley. It was on farmland and had a quiet river and plenty of bright sunshine. The sun grew hot and soon took its toll on the skin. There were hundreds of kids who came to the medical tent for sunburn treatment. The heat and sun led others to seek escape in the water by skinny-dipping in the refreshing water of the river. I saw no one startled.

The people there asked for very little. They did not complain even though it was very w a r m and crowded. They did things for each other because they wanted to. They shared what they had.

It was a very peaceful gathering. There were no fights. Most of the kids there were practicing concepts of the religion that is being taught in many churches, but not practiced by its members. A passage from the Bible says, "May all God's children unite in peace and love." At the end of Mass we are asked to extend a sign of peace or friendship to those near us. I find some in church look straight ahead or stand perfectly still, unwilling to physically communicate. The youths at the rock festival extended their greetings spontaneously.

I feel these may be controversial statements. I feel the news media coverage gave a distorted view of the Wadena happening. On two different occasions, youths came to me with billfolds they had found. There was money in one and the other contained credit cards and personal valuable papers. The youths were concerned that the owners find their lost valuables.

There was no set pattern for dress or hair styles for the estimated 12,000-30,000 people at the festival. Many of the males had long hair, but there were also many who had mighty short cuts for the 1970s. Simplicity was the rule. Bluejeans, t-

shirts, plain shirts, and shirts with dyed designs were worn by both sexes. Some of the more fortunate had floppy hats on their heads to keep the sun away.

During the afternoon, I wandered toward the enormous stage. It was surrounded by hundreds of tents of all sizes, including some that wouldn't have been big enough for my St. Bernard dog! There were improvised lean-to shelters made of branches, leaves, and stones. Each person had staked his claim to a small piece of land which was to be his for the weekend.

One could buy most anything at the booths or tents along the way. There were leather goods, wine, soft drinks, jewelry, roasted corn, ice cream, Mexican and Chinese food. This portion of the festival reminded me of the country fair. Dark green metal buildings were located at various places on the grounds. These were the toilet facilities. Contrary to news stories, I found them to be neat, clean, and adequately furnished. I never saw waiting lines for the facilities.

The sale of drugs at Wadena was not hidden. I saw signs on panel trucks and other vehicles that said, "Marijuana $5.00 a lid," or "L.S.D. $1.50 tab, results guaranteed." A "lid" is a quantity of marijuana in a cellophane sack. Another sign offered "super speed," (methedrine) and "grass" (marijuana) for sale. Some other names used were "orange sunshine," "black Cadillacs," "LSD 25," "reds," or "red devils," "brown mescaline," and "pink mescaline." Some prices were $2.00 a "hit" for the more powerful drugs and some were 5 for $1.00. I did not see any signs advertising cocaine or heroin. A man told me all of the people he had talked to feared cocaine and heroin. They were satisfied with marijuana.

Nor were most attempting to hide their use of drugs. For many there, the use of drugs was as easy as drinking a glass of ice water on a hot day. Some people told me it was necessary to use marijuana at the festival in order to be a part of the group. Some really enjoyed the effects of the drugs. A large number, including myself, were able to be a part of the group without the use of drugs. We didn't f e e l left out because we "straights" were there in number, too. There were some drug overdose cases and a few "bad trips" treated. Many people witnessed the reactions of the people who had taken the drugs and decided taking drugs was not their thing. Many youths actually told me this.

There has been criticism of the availability of drugs at Wadena, but Wadena was not the beginning of drugs in Iowa. By word of mouth from students and working people, drugs have been available at high schools, colleges and private parties in Iowa for some time. I was criticized by a minority for attending the rock festival because of the drugs there. This doesn't bother me because I have no desire to become a

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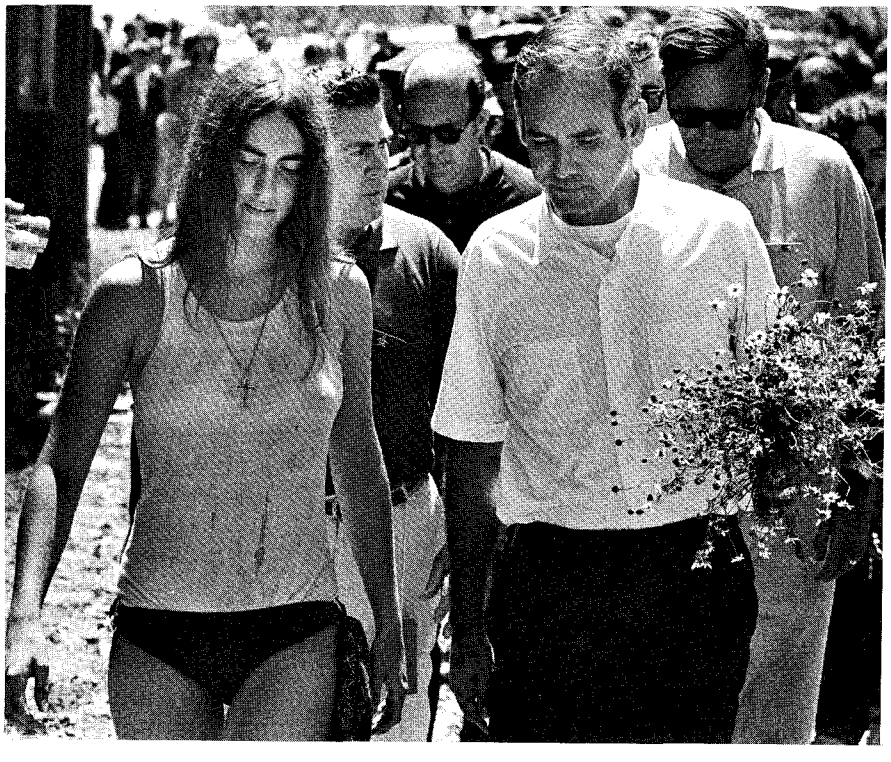
part of any group taking drugs. I watched the kids who had reactions from an overdose of drugs, and the pain and agony they experienced is completely unnecessary for my existence. I feel that taking part in the rock festival as I did gave me an insight into the serious drug problem our country is facing today. I don't approve of drugs, but neither am I a judge to condemn those who use them. As a nurse and citizen in the community, it is my duty—and my privilege—to help in the prevention of drug taking.

I think it is important for mature adults and parents to become a part of such things as rock festivals in order to be able to educate the youth. It is here that they congregate in large numbers to be themselves and to communicate with others. A few try drugs for the first time—out of curiosity or for other reasons. While visiting with these kids, you realize that they believe in the drugs. They say the drugs take them away from their problems for a period of time. Some of these kids say they have no one to talk to about their problems, so they finally "turn on" with drugs. Many have had no communication at home. I talked to some kids who had been given, at home, any material thing they desired. These same kids were unable to communicate at home because their parents were too involved in their own social activities. I've heard so many parents say, "We gave him everything we could afford to buy!" but I found out at this gathering that kids don't want everything money can buy. They *do* want to communicate with their parents. They want to be loved, and they want to be a part of something.

In the city of Wappingers Falls, New York, a general practitioner by the name of Dr. William Abruzzi keeps office hours. He thinks the whole concept of "blowing" your mind in order to find it is horrendous, yet he spends much of his time helping youth on drugs and has helped give medical treatment at several rock festivals. I agree that we have the problem; we should not ignore it, but make an attempt to help prevent it. We all can help prevent some of these problems if we make the effort to become informed.

I will never know just how much good I did for these kids, but to see smiles on their faces and to hear a sincere thank-you so often was most rewarding. I feel that my knowledge of youth has increased by my experience of being there. It was a wonderful experience to be a part of such a large group which believed in peace and brotherhood, *and found it.* For such a large group of people gathered together, the peace and tranquility was almost unbelievable. It was a good experience for many to know they had the will-power and were not tempted to use drugs. Many of the youths I interviewed were impressed with the peace among so many young people. There were no fights at this gathering.



I interviewed a number of 40- to 60-year-old people who actually attended the festival or were near the site. All were extremely impressed with the courteous manners of the youths. They said they were treated with more respect there than at places like Cattle Congress, fairs, and ballgames. A 20-year-old friend of our family said to me, "I wonder how much peace there is among 500 adults consuming alcohol at a convention?" This same young man told me he and his friends had bought some groceries in Wadena and asked a couple of adults about 65 who lived next to the store if they might sit on their lawn to eat. The older couple was most eager to have them. They were friendly, and anxious to visit; they had even gone out to the festival grounds themselves and actually enjoyed some of the musical entertainment. This elderly couple was at least making an effort to communicate with youth, and they did an impressive job of it. Most proprietors of shops and gas stations were pleased with the festival patrons' courteousness.

When the time came to leave the rock festival, I did not say goodbye to any of the workers, only "See ya." Goodbyes are most difficult for me. My dusty red station wagon was loaded with youths, sleeping bags, happiness and contentment. In a way the end was near; however, we would always have memories of this weekend to look back on. At the farmhouse, I stopped. The last of the youths and their belongings got out of the car to make the long journey home. There was a feeling of satisfaction within me. I felt that

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I was more adequately prepared to help with some of the problems youth are facing. I felt more open-minded than I had ever felt. Most important, I realized that there are a lot of wonderful kids today who have a lot of good ideas and common sense.

At the barricades, I stopped to thank the patrolmen for the good work they had done that weekend. Many youths had commented to me about their patience, politeness, and understanding. They did not seem ill at ease, even though they had not been faced with such a task before. The police were tactful and courteous, and they were willing to do much more than maintain law and order.

Many of us look forward to another rock festival because of what it gave to us or for what we could contribute to it. A group happening is good for all of us. It can bring out good qualities in us. It gives people the opportunity to take their minds off themselves and do things for other people. Even though a festival may last a short time, it gives many a contentment and peace of mind that we all need once in a while. It was a weekend that many of us will think about for a long time, a happening that seems like only a dream for a small town in Iowa, but I know it really happened—and it did.

—Patricia Moes

Ohio

On November 3, 1970, America awaited news from Ohio's 11th legislative district. Walter Cronkite and Eric Sevareid flew into Lebanon by helicopter, while David Brinkley and John Chancellor made parachute jumps from an NBC jet in order to arrive on time at their election night headquarters in Wilmington. Already ensconced in Wilmington's General Denver Hotel, James Reston and Theodore H. White swapped insights over several martinis. Technicians scurried about setting up sound equipment and cameras to record the most symbolic political race of the year.

The quiet that usually prevails in Warren and Clinton counties was shattered during the month of October. Why were Time *and* Newsweek *correspondents filing copy about Blanchester farmers? What motivated George Gallup and Lou Harris to poll Franklin housewives? After establishing the theme of this campaign as a showdown between Nixon's silent majority and Democratic liberalism, the pundits and newscasters discovered that Ohio's 11th district race for the state legislature displayed all the dramatic elements of their paper scenarios. A twenty-six-year-old college administrator on a liberal Democratic platform ran against a three-term Republican incumbent who oozed middle-American provincialism. The fact that clinched matters for the media was the Republican's last name — "Nixon." "If the GOP lost this contest," mused reporters, "Spiro Agnew's medicine show would permanently fold."*

This is why Nixon, Agnew, Ronald Reagan, William F. Buckley, Jr., Bob Hope, Billy Graham, and John Wayne made whirlwind appearances in the district during the last month. The Democrats countered the GOP blitz by staging a spectacular of their own. On Saturday, October 31, Edmund Muskie, Edward Kennedy, Sargent Shriver, Harold Hughes, Paul Newman, Gore Vidal, Tony Randall, and Simon and Garfunkel formed a chorus line along Wilmington's main street and sang an updated, hard rock version of "Why, Oh Why, Oh Why Oh, Why Did I Ever Leave Ohio?" This contest could be compared to the Scopes Trial of the 1920's. The actual combatants were submerged and forgotten amid the hoopla and glitter of an event that took on international significance.

* * *

Such were the autumn daydreams that kept a campaign manager writing press releases and exhorting volunteers. Truly this race did pit an advocate of the new politics against a proponent of the old. Alyce O'Brien, a twenty-six-year-old veteran of peace vigils and Eugene McCarthy's 1968 primary campaigns, ran against a provincial Republican who abstains from issues or even from voting in the Ohio House of Representatives unless a particular issue or vote pleases his constituents or an important lobby. With a master's degree in Political Science, Alyce would rather discuss concepts of government in a classroom than gab with housewives at a supermarket or joke with farmers over their back fences. Her opponent, the rural equivalent to an urban boss, sends a dollar to the parents of every new baby born in his district. Attached to the dollar is a card that asks the parents to start a savings account for their child with the compliments of Corwin Nixon.

This Nixon presents himself as a naive country boy with no political advantages except the love of his neighbors, but as a long time GOP organizer and as the manager of a large harness racing establishment, he can command a retinue of pols and track cronies to exert pressure on possible defectors from his rural machine. Couple this power with Nixon's empathy for the attitudes of this region, and you create a plethora of obstacles for a small band of academicians with a campaign chest of several hundred dollars. Armed with little more than righteous indignation and a gaggle of faculty wife volunteers, it is small wonder that I continually conjured up memories of events that persuaded me to commit myself to this campaign.

Certain memories remain fresh: those days following the Cambodian invasion and the Kent State killings. In retrospect, one could label the campus activities of those days as "the politics of Armageddon." Richard Nixon's Cambodian speech of April 30th, followed by the Kent State massacre of May 4th, seemed to signal the end of the world to many of us. After the frenzy of a May 5th filled with assemblies, meetings, and workshops, I remember how relieved I was to leave the rhetoric behind when I joined the group of 100 students and faculty members who were walking sixty miles to Columbus to present a petition of grievances to Governor James A.

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Rhodes. As we ambled along back country roads my wife, Marcy, joked that startled drivers must either believe that we constituted the first wave of the peasants' revolt or that we were a rather scruffy-looking 4-H Club outing.

Late Friday morning, we reached our destination. As we sat on the capitol steps, waiting for an audience with a representative from the Governor's office, we were joined by delegations from twenty-two other colleges (including a student leader from Kent State). Five thousand people jammed the State House mall for the formal rally. As I looked at all the students and listened to all the speeches about Cambodia and Kent State, I wondered how much of this idealism could be sustained. Would these people help to elect peace candidates and a progressive governor next November? After all, the governor who sent National Guardsmen to Kent State to disband every student or faculty assembly was serving his last seven months in office, and Nixon, the Machiavelli of American politics, only comprehends pro- or anti-Administration Congressional body counts. Could the symbolic gesture of this warm spring day lead to tangible results in the Fall?

Kent State strengthened my commitment to work for the gubernatorial candidacy of John Gilligan, a spokesman for peace, the cities, and the environment. When the Ohio General Assembly passed a hastily devised anti-campus-disorder bill in early June, Alyce O'Brien's race for the legislature took on new meaning for me. Catering to a backlash against youth, legislators established procedures for suspending state university students and faculty members (suspected of causing disorder) prior to their conviction in court. This blow at due process of law made me aware of the importance of those legislative races that most voters lump in the dog-catcher category.

Another occurrence reinforced my decision to spend a fall on the hustings in rural Ohio. On June 10th, I joined a group of Wilmington College students and faculty members for a meeting with John Ehrlichman, the Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs. In a relaxed, friendly mood, the former Seattle lawyer lectured us for an hour and a half on the wisdom of Nixon. Treating us like naive children, he told us that students were uninformed and that 85% of the people supported Administration policies. Our recitation of Republican critics like the Ripon Society, John Lindsay, John Gardner, and Senators Javits, Goodell, Case, Percy, Brooke, and Hatfield didn't alter his contention that dissent was monopolized by hippies and yippies.

This well-tailored advisor with a slight paunch was no villain. I might buy a used car from him, and I would vote for him if he was nominated for the Diner's Club Man of The Year. However, it frightened me that Ehrlichman was Nixon's top assistant for domestic affairs. I sensed that he was treating such issues as poverty, urban decay, and the environment like a Rotary Club executive who was trying to decide what kind of Christmas decorations to string across Main Street, USA. His self-assurance depressed me, but it also made me wish to prove him wrong. Somehow Ehrlichman and Nixon must be shown that everyone in middle America isn't a Babbitt: that the Administration cannot count upon a knee-jerk response from the so-called silent majority. As we left his office in the West Wing of the White House, one student exclaimed: "I thought I was talking to my father; I expected to get spanked."

In mid-August, we launched the O'Brien campaign at the Clinton County Fair. Alyce's first public appearance was timed in conjunction with Howard Metzenbaum's visit to Wilmington. In hopes of stealing Republican votes from Robert Taft, Jr., the labor attorney and parking lot entrepreneur was touring the county fair circuit. In order to gain free coverage from the media, we decided that Alyce should hitch herself to the senate hopeful's coattails.

It was one of those humid afternoons in August. From the Democratic booth, we watched people stroll about the dusty fairgrounds. Metzenbaum arrived like a whirlwind. A retinue of teenagers preceded him, and they passed out buttons, leaflets, and plastic baseballs emblazoned with the slogan "I'm A Metz Fan." Then Metzenbaum strode in shaking hands with everyone in sight. I was struck by his talent for this kind of person-to-person banter. He looked people in the eye, shook their hands, and made affable and sincere noises. His high speed style of campaigning suggested an important man on the move.

At the judge's stand inside the main arena, Metzenbaum, Alyce, and the other Democratic candidates gave one-minute speeches. Alyce shrewdly mentioned her childhood on a farm. Before he was whisked away for a Cincinnati rally, Metzenbaum taped an interview with a local radio station and was photographed with the Clinton County Fair's prize boar. That evening, Alyce appeared in a parade. I drove the borrowed convertible while Alyce and Ed, her husband, waved at the grandstands. Marcy and Susan Reid, a friend, shook pompoms in their rôles as the O'Brien Girls. Ahead of us on the parade ground rolled the elaborate float of the Democratic Congressional candidate, while behind us ambled herds of prize cattle and sheep.

Ten days later, I got a chance to talk with John Gilligan. Ed O'Brien and I took Alyce's place at a Democratic luncheon in Lebanon, Ohio. After a summer of drafting position papers for his urban task force, I was interested to see if the gubernatorial candidate was interested in or even aware of my proposals.

Gilligan looked younger than his forty-nine years. His red hair, Ivy League clothes and polished oratory made him seem out of place in a gathering of small town Democrats. With our longish hair and wide ties, Ed and I felt like the token hippy member of the Lebanon Junior Chamber of Commerce. After lunch, Gilligan outlined the faults of Ohio's present Administration. "Allowing the sixth wealthiest state to rank 46th, 49th, and 46th in state aid to education, cities and mental health programs is unacceptable," he said. The former Cincinnati councilman gave

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an urban-oriented talk, and Ed and I concluded that he blundered by failing to mention farm or rural life.

Later, in a brief chat, Gilligan informed me that he liked my proposal for an Ohio urban development corporation with powers to build parks, housing, and whole new cities. He also was curious about my position paper advocating a state land bank to purchase property for future public use. As his aides hustled him away to another meeting, he vowed to call a meeting of the urban task force in the near future.

During the final week of September, we made our first efforts to seek campaign coverage from the local media. After mailing a letter to Corwin Nixon challenging him to a debate, Marcy and I spent the day delivering our press release about the debate to the newspapers and radio stations in the two-county region. With little money to pay for advertising, we were counting on town newspapers to use our copy, but since only one paper carried our first release, few people ever heard about the proposed debate. Accustomed to big cities where journals will publish an opponent's views, I was appalled by this boycott of our propaganda. I was learning that small towns come closest to that unbending Establishment young people love to rail against.

In the month ahead, only two papers faithfully printed our releases depicting Alyce's views on education, pollution, law and taxes. The radio stations and the other papers chose to ignore our copy. In a final effort to get Alyce mentioned in the daily Wilmington paper, I concocted an anecdote about Alyce campaigning at a shopping center, and a joke Halloween press release describing Alyce's hopes for a last minute endorsement from the Great Pumpkin. The journal used both of these innocuous pieces. Fortunately, we collected enough contributions to buy radio time for some thirty-second ads that we used during the last week of the campaign.

Alyce's first date before a large audience came on October 8th. At coffees and small gatherings, Alyce talked informally with the guests. For her appearance at a community forum in Franklin, she needed a speech. I wrote a rough draft during the morning, and for several hours that afternoon, Alyce, Ed, Marcy, and I finished the document that was to become known as "the speech." We revised it for each new occasion, but we always salvaged a few passages from the original version. While Alyce read it aloud several times to learn the rhythm, the rest of us booed, hissed, clapped, and cheered. When I listened to Alyce deliver the speech that evening, I complimented myself on becoming the 11th district's answer to Richard Goodwin.

About two-hundred-fifty people attended the Franklin Forum. As the audience creaked their chairs on the wood floor, they eyed the state and local candidates sitting at a table in front of the red curtain of the stage. Corwin Nixon was present. Decked out in a blue blazer and an ill fitting wig, he looked very much like a rural politician who had made good.

Alyce was the star of the evening. Compared with the collective inarticulateness around her, she stood out like a female Demosthenes. I was forced to hide my head in my hands to avoid breaking into hysterics as I listened to one speaker who sounded like LBJ declaiming from a Dick and Jane reader. Corwin Nixon, with no prepared speech, mumbled a few sentences before sitting down. Simply stated, he said that what was good for the 11th district was good for Ohio. He stressed his loyalty to Warren and Clinton counties, and he reeled off the names of the committees that he served on in the Legislature. The finale of the Forum featured a rhetorical battle between the two Congressional candidates. As one journalist later quipped, this race proved that two men could easily wrap themselves up in the same American flag. After the formal proceedings, the Franklin Girl Scouts marched out with trays piled high with a hundred different kinds of cookies — all of them inedible.

Every campaign has its low point. Ours came on the evening of October 16th. Depressed about the news of the Portage County grand jury indictments, we sat around disbelieving that those jurors could so completely ignore the FBI and Scranton Commission reports. What effect would the indictments have on Ohio campuses? Would students react by taking to the streets? Any violence, we felt, would mean defeat for Gilligan, Metzenbaum, and liberal congressional candidates. A phone call interrupted this conversation, and we learned that the local chapter of the Ohio Education Association had endorsed Corwin Nixon. Because he promised tax reforms and a large increase in state aid to education, the OEA (the state teachers' organization and lobby) backed John Gilligan for governor. Although Alyce ran on Gilligan's platform, the OEA was indiscriminately endorsing Republican legislators in order to avoid accusations that it was a partisan organization. We felt sunk. If the OEA endorsement jeopardized Alyce's support among teachers, who could she count on? In an attempt to mask our gloom, we drove to a high school football game and stuffed Alyce's leaflets under windshield wipers.

Election night came with no bangs or whimpers. The clique running the campaign assembled for a quiet evening with the candidate. Most of us sat around in bluejeans drinking beer. Walter Cronkite and Eric Sevareid were on hand, but we were watching them and not vice versa.

Since Alyce and Ed didn't have a phone, one of us periodically went to a public booth to call the Clinton County Board of Elections. Later in the evening, Alyce, Ed, and I walked to the Court House to analyze the precinct sheets the clerks were posting on a bulletin board. We were losing by a 2-1 margin in Clinton County. Because the telephone at the Warren County Board was always busy, results there were a mystery.

Marcy and I were tired, and we drove home about 11:00. Before going to bed, I got through to Warren County. We were receiving about 40% of the vote over there.

* * *

What conclusions can one draw from this campaign? Adding up the

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returns in the two counties, Alyce received 37% of the vote. After all our work, should we curse a system that produced such results?

In *Do It!*, Jerry Rubin describes his mayoralty campaign in order to show that democracy is a fraud. He concludes that a system that defeated him so badly must be bankrupt and irrevelant. Hidden amid Rubin's phrases advocating anarchy and revolution is an elitist philosophy that feeds on egotism. Unless one accepts the concept that a minority should force its ideas on an unwilling majority, one must reject this philosophy.

If one desires change but views violence as an evil, one should work to enlarge the 37% vote totals of candidates like Alyce O'Brien. The politics of Armageddon must give way to a permanent coalition that will convince a majority of Americans that national priorities need rearranging. This election, after all, was no disaster. Men like Gilligan and Philip Hart won by large majorities. Despite the victories of Buckley and Brock, the Administration's politics of fear essentially failed. Spiro Agnew may be as well-known a celebrity as Alfred E. Newman once was, but the Vice President's victory didn't elect many congressmen. Finally, although Corwin Nixon will return to the Ohio Legislature in January, someone should realize that voters may start to take seriously the O'Brien campaign slogan—*One Nixon's Enough.* —*William K. Woods*

Chicago

(Blues music is the historical musical compilation of the Black Experience in America. What I write about it here is not in any effort to dislodge, weaken or challenge the Black proprietorship of the Blues, but to bring news of it to a predominantly white audience and to sketch in some of the apparent factors that make Chicago the Urban Blues capital of America and the only major city where Blues continues as a living music still serving its traditional function for countless numbers of people who use it in their daily lives. —J. S.)

The Blues is known the world over as the special sound of a special condition. It is America's most compelling enrichment of musical history, and Chicago is the special city that has become "home" to Blues music in its transition from a rural to an urban form.

The first part of the Blues came up North on trains with the artists who journeyed to Chicago to record their music. Later, the whole Blues moved up with the migrant Blacks who were its audience, joining the Northward search for a better life. It came up in the coach cars with the bewitchingly beautiful names, along the route of the Illinois Central railroad—from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The people and the music got up North together, finally, and have remained together in Chicago ever since. Here in the dark confusion of a new and urban surrounding, the people and the Blues began their nervous transformation into new lives.

Accommodation for Blues was slow, as it was for the migrant Blacks. Jazz was already in lights, but home folks hadn't got their own and it worried them more than somewhat. The late great Blues artist Big Bill Broonzy lived in Chicago, and he wrote more than four hundred Blues. They were all songs about his people, and they hardened them up and they softened them down. His music helped let the people know they weren't alone and gave them truths about the new urban life to hum. When put into Blues forms, the new problems didn't seem so remote from the back country.

The Blues still lives in Chicago with the Black people who stored it up from their overabundance of poverty, from their wealth of misery and humiliation, and made it into a cultural bank that can be drawn on when you're low in spirit, mean in feeling, or just uptight, tense and wornout weary.

Blues was a heartland music always, an expression mainly of the folks from Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Arkansas who now people the West side of Chicago. Through the years, the Blues culture has burrowed deep into the city, and it lives there comfortably with the people who gave it birth, thriving in the countless West and South side Blues clubs, shaping the new Blues artists and sending the wailing waves of new creation all over the world. For Blues is like a tobacco plant: there is just one kind of seed, and the flavor of the plant varies only with the kinds of soil it grows in.

The soil of Ghetto life in Chicago underlies the new flavor of Urban Blues, and understanding and acknowledgement of this special condition is requisite to comprehension of the Blues meaning. It is what accounts for the Chicago Blues flavor.

In a small coffee house called "No Exit" on Chicago's North side, young whites are apt to find their first exposure to traditional blues in the person of Jimmy Brewer, a blind singer who plays one or two nights a week. Jimmy is an authentic traditional singer, largely unknown to the public, but important because he helps to establish the musical connection between Blues and religious music, and because he typifies the many fine Blues artists who have never been recorded. While Jimmy sings, the coffee house waitresses pass the hat, hoping to extract enough alms from the listeners to make Jimmy's time worth something to him.

Or one might first meet Blues music in Chicago when changing from the bus to the subway at Grand Avenue and State Street. Here, Arvella Gray, a Blues artist street singer, plies his trade on Friday afternoons, hoping to hear his cup rattle with a split of the take from Chicago's working population who pass this busy corner. Gray plays on a steel guitar with a raucous tone and hammers out a sweet sound withal that attracts people to stand around for long times, often missing their first bus connection to get more of his sound. Ubiquitous, and with an inner sense of *where* to be *when*, Gray often turns up at special events, standing

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quietly at the side and compelling an audience with his sound.

Around the corner from the Friday afternoon location of the streetsinger is a unique place known as the Jazz Record Mart. It is home to collectors of jazz records and also the home of Delmark Records, a young firm that specializes in recording the Chicago Blues sound. Owned by Bob Koester, the thriving little company has a very strong feeling for the heartbeat of the Blues. Koester and his wife go out every Saturday night to Blues clubs all over the city to hear the new sounds and to cement friendships and to look, always look, for special talent with a special message. Among other projects, he plans soon to bring out an album of the streetsinger's music, which will mark the first release of Arvella Gray's sound to the record-buying public.

One of Delmark Records' brightest stars was Magic Sam, a talent whose rise was just beginning to take popular form when he died suddenly of a heart attack last winter. Very much into the newer tradition of urban Blues, Magic Sam played in a club on the broken streets of the West side Lawndale community called the L & A Club, a focal point of nightlife in the area.

There, as in other Blues clubs, the *new* Blues began its unfolding as it lives in Chicago, out in the Ghetto where the people are looking hard for a verified statement of their lives. It is the constant honing of the performer against the abrasive truth of living that sharpens his song into a pointed communion with his audience. Here, they swear him in as a witness, and hoot him off the stand if he lies to them.

The largest influence on the Chicago Blues scene — both literally and figuratively — is Willie Dixon. He stands tall and broad as a person, and looms gigantically in the music world as a great bass player and composer of more than a thousand Blues numbers recorded by artists ranging from Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters to The Rolling Stones and The Cream. Willie also serves as an A & R man for Chess Records, Chicago's largest record manufacturer, supervising production of its extensive line of Blues records on three separate labels.

Willie's basement is full of pianos, guitars and sound recording equipment. It's a colorful, famous, and endearing spot in the knowledgeable Blues underground. Many of the leading Blues artists, now known all over the world, took their first faltering professional steps here, under this tutelage, drawing on Willie's 35 years of experience on the Chicago Blues scene.

Willie Dixon's countless friends — musicians in the Blues field, largely — drop by to visit and sit around together, talking and playing, letting their hearts wander back through it all, jamming toward the kind of music that lies ahead. On any given evening you might find Little Brother Montgomery, Johnny Shines, Otis Rush, Jimmy "Fast-Fingers" Dawkins, Junior Wells, Howlin' Wolf, and anybody else who happens to be in town. And the music they make on their own, for their own pleasure, for a feel into where it's going, is not like the music you hear out on the street. Later, it becomes that, but in Willie Dixon's basement it's too busy just getting born.

The enduring popularity of Blues is keyed to the audience. More than any other kind of music, it is important for Blues to understand the requirements of its audience. It is important for it to understand who is out there buying the sound, what they want that sound to say, how they want it said, and why. And here we get into the dangerous area of "*What is the Blues?*"

And here I've no intention of being a white expert on black music, but only to take a perhaps superficial look at what of the Blues phenomenon is visible to outsiders, acknowledging at the outset that it is a limited, alien, and in no way definitive view.

Jails and prisons have, in one way or another, always been a major reference point in Blues music. Out in the world where many of the singers come from, prison — or the threat of prison — is a natural part of the special experience, and many fine tunes have come out of the jailhouse encounter.

At the Cook County Jail in Chicago, the inmates entertain themselves at special daily programs which, with the rotation required, each prisoner shares in about once a week. Here, there are formal presentations of music and song by the inmates, a surprisingly large percentage of which focuses on Blues music. Less formal Blues celebration takes place continuously in the cell blocks and helps pass the time down.

Perhaps because there is such an innate sense of Blues among men cut off from their roots, prisoners instinctively sing about it. There is also a special response among an audience of prison inmates that is readily visible to the observer, a sense of meaning for the Blues unobtainable in any other perspective. There is a haunting hollowness that hunts the faces and echoes off, finally, down the corridors. County jail is a maximum security prison, and Blues is maximum security music.

Behind the prisoners and the men awaiting trial, out in a Ghetto which in a sense is a big jail behind the little jail, many of the citizens endure their daily trial. Out there the big, mean everyday Blues lives, with most of it — perhaps even the best of it — never recorded. Out there, the people are hemmed in by the white world, or by a shattered love, or are homesick for a home they've never known. And it's still the Blues, because the Blues is made the same as a pearl in an oyster. It starts when an irritation from the world gets inside and hurts till you've got to dredge up something from your innards to cover up that pain. When you do it, after a while, the pain subsides or is transformed into something almost beautiful, and it's called "The Blues."

The Blues is a feeling, a condition, a kind of music. It's a tempered lament converting anger into anguish and anguish into joy, a passionate lifetime squeezed painfully into twelve bars of music.

Sometimes it's just a walk around the wallpaper in the unheated rooms

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of the heart, sometimes it's the part of God that the Church forgets. It's a kind of music that lets you pretend you *is*, even when everybody knows you *isn't*.

The Blues is making friends with life when life is making friends with misery.

Sometimes the Blues is the song of a lark in a cage who can sense the forest; sometimes the roar of a lion in the forest who can sense the bars of a cage.

By the time the special experience is under control and translated into music that has social value, it becomes a special kind of victory celebration, a tuneful understanding of the experience that lies behind. If there is truth in that victory, the audience senses it and responds with gratitude to the artist for having "gone up the mountain" and come back down to "tell it like it is." The prime requisite for a Blues artist's success is that he has to "have been there," the "there" being whatever the artist takes for his subject matter.

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Blues artists are a hard-core brotherhood, drawn together loosely by common experience and individual originality. They get together for "Blues Mondays" at Pepper's lounge on the South side of Chicago, where by custom they drop in and play together as a way of coming down slow from the big week-ends which are the heart of a bluesman's life and livelihood. Another reason to come to Blues Monday is to hear the newcomers who sit in, hoping to be selected as sidemen in a band that is forming or one that needs filling out. Every name player in town drops by at one time or another and lets go, as the day unwinds from about noon until the last strong man feels he's tired enough to go home and fall asleep.

Perhaps typical of the urgent, timeless but timely story of the life of the Blues, is the story of one bluesman. He is of the people and lives on the fringe of great popularity with faith in the future of his music. He has his own band and has had for more than ten years. Ten years. Ten years of struggle to keep the group together and work out their feelings into a sound of their own that tells the story of the collective soul to the public. Known to all the musicians and playing frequently as a sideman in recording sessions with other artists, Jimmy "Fast-Fingers" Dawkins is a man whose life and music are one and the same thing. He is a bluesman.

The sense of the Blues audience for the authentic in feeling is the absolute critical factor in the music. The wave of new meaning and popularity given to the Blues as it turns the corner from the rural music to an urban art form comes largely from the infallible young who have found a modern kinship with the sound and spirit of the Blues. All over the world, young people growing up have tapped into the great sustaining root of Blues and draw their own form of confirmation from it, venerating the Blues musician for his perception of soul truth and giving him a new popularity unknown in the "down home" days of early Blues tradition.

The unforeseen and unprecedented demands of the affluent society outside the Ghetto on the limited supply of authentic bluesmen, combined with the vagaries of access to the communications, distribution, and technology required to market a commodity, has led to much disturbance of the natural Blues ecology, and created some ironic circumstances, often surrounded by bitter feelings.

There is, for example, the case of the Willie Dixon song "Little Red Rooster," originally recorded by Howlin' Wolf with only small sales and modest distribution within the Black community. Later, popular singer Sam Cooke recorded the number and did somewhat better with it, again within the Black community. More recently, the enormously popular British group, The Rolling Stones, took the song and the sound pattern established by Wolf, keeping it quite intact, and made it into a hit. What some consider to have been exploitation of Howlin' Wolf and his whole tradition sold more than a half-million records for the white singers, leaving behind some residual bitterness in the Black Blues community.

Paul Butterfield's now all-white band, playing in the Chicago Blues tradition, has found a greater acceptance in the white community with a "black" commodity than have the big Black bands.

Certainly this is not a fault of the musicians themselves, nor of the bookers, nor of the audience, but is related to the key problems of inequity that plague our times.

Whatever the feelings—and they can be just as intense when Black musicians answer the call of white audiences, depriving their kinsmen of their presence—the facts are that the worlds intertwine in interest, but there is little access across the color lines. It is virtually impossible for mass white audiences to share in the Black community celebration of the Blues, and something of the Blues changes when it makes the transition to the white community.

The call of youth is answered in the multi-dimensional palaces of mixed-media entertainment, such as the now shuttered Kinetic Playground on Chicago's North side, which featured Blues bands regularly and drew enormous audiences before it was closed by fire. Here, the music played for listening and dancing, alongside psychedelic light shows, karate exhibitions, and related programs of interest to the young. The music was perceived and absorbed eagerly, but in an entirely different social context, with the special condition and special experience only tangentially present

OF NOTE . . .

The editors of the NAR are pleased to acknowledge the inclusion of "Warm Flesh-Colored Ode," a poem by Donald Justice [Winter 1969], in the fourth annual American Literary Anthology to be published by Harper & Row.

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to the extent that long hair, youth, and vibrant outcry at life's reality let the leaves intertwine. The roots, however, remained as separated in the soil of the city as they ever were.

There is hope for a spiritual transcendency, but it is not realistically supported by the social and economic structures and constitutes, finally, and sadly, a good wish, a good vibration that must either peter out or dilute Blues music.

There is also a strong intellectual response to the value of the Blues authenticity as a human expression of the times and circumstances in which we live; and the stained glass halls of the Universities acknowledge with interest the broken glass culture that Blues represents with a folk-lorical concern expressed in "Blues Festivals" which draw huge crowds to sold-out performances.

Tentatively, even the removed suburban housewife succumbs to the irresistible human extractions of the music, and while Ghetto kids learn to suck sounds out of a "harp" in back alleys, she joins other interested, soul-seeking persons at a unique school called The Old Town School of Folk Music, where she learns from books and instructors how to pick out the Blues chords on a guitar and verbalize the painful cries of hope deferred, seeking insight and illumination of human feelings that do not come naturally in her milieu.

A living music because it changes with life, Blues finds new shoots growing out of its abundant rootlife, and while suburban Sally Jo exerts herself to pluck the old chords, they are already being obsoleted by the new.

Growing up in Chicago's Black ghettos, the old forms are being tormented by new needs for the music to express the new people. Chicago Blacks take their heritage seriously, and as they force their lives to change against the pressures, the music undergoes some transformation.

Blues is part, but by no means all, of their musical story, and new chapters are being written by such groups as the Pharaohs, working in the Afro-Arts Theater, a cultural center prized by the South side Black community for its militant affirmation of the Black man and the Black spirit. Keenly tuned to political as well as social reality, these unique musicians are welding the Blues to new cultural building materials and coming out with sounds that turn the traditional laments into shouts of anger. They are taking the sounds of Chicago Blues and grafting them to new city strains, making a new sound responsive to the emotional needs of their now urban people.

Blues is heartland music for almost half the city's population, and catches the cantering enthusiasm for life shared by downtrodden people the world over. It is an expression of the dynamic energy that helped Chicago rise so tall above the great Central Plain.

Urban Blues is, above all, the contribution of the Black people of Chicago to the world. It is a unique understanding of the deeply spiritual universe we live in, and Chicago is still the eye of the tornado of Blues legend. —*Joseph Sander*

FAYE REDDECLIFF

AN AFTER-DINNER CONVERSATION

Bone-white with work-scarred hands, she sat and was not noticed. Unless one of the speakers turned and found her blocking his view of a listener.

Patience comes with age and she began with more than usual. She stayed for more than an hour, the voices moving around and over her.

"Listen, I was with 'Bloody' Patton, and nothing can shock or upset me any more."

"I'm telling you, you don't know anything until you've seen the guy next to you with his guts in his hands."

Sometimes when the talk seemed more than rough, someone would turn and look at the woman as if to say, "You chose to stay — then stay and hear."

Her son's proud voice rose with the others, holding out for all to see: red blood soaking black soil, the death, the dying, the dead.

And they nodded and smiled, congratulatory smiles, that they were alive and—they implied—that they lived while others died.

While they lit cigars and sipped their wine, she spoke, the voice thin but clear like the ring of crystal.

"For nine months I suffered with child, then brought him forth in pain."

Again they smiled and her son said, not unkindly, but smiling to the others, "And that, for you, is anguish?"

"It was not, then . . . It is now."

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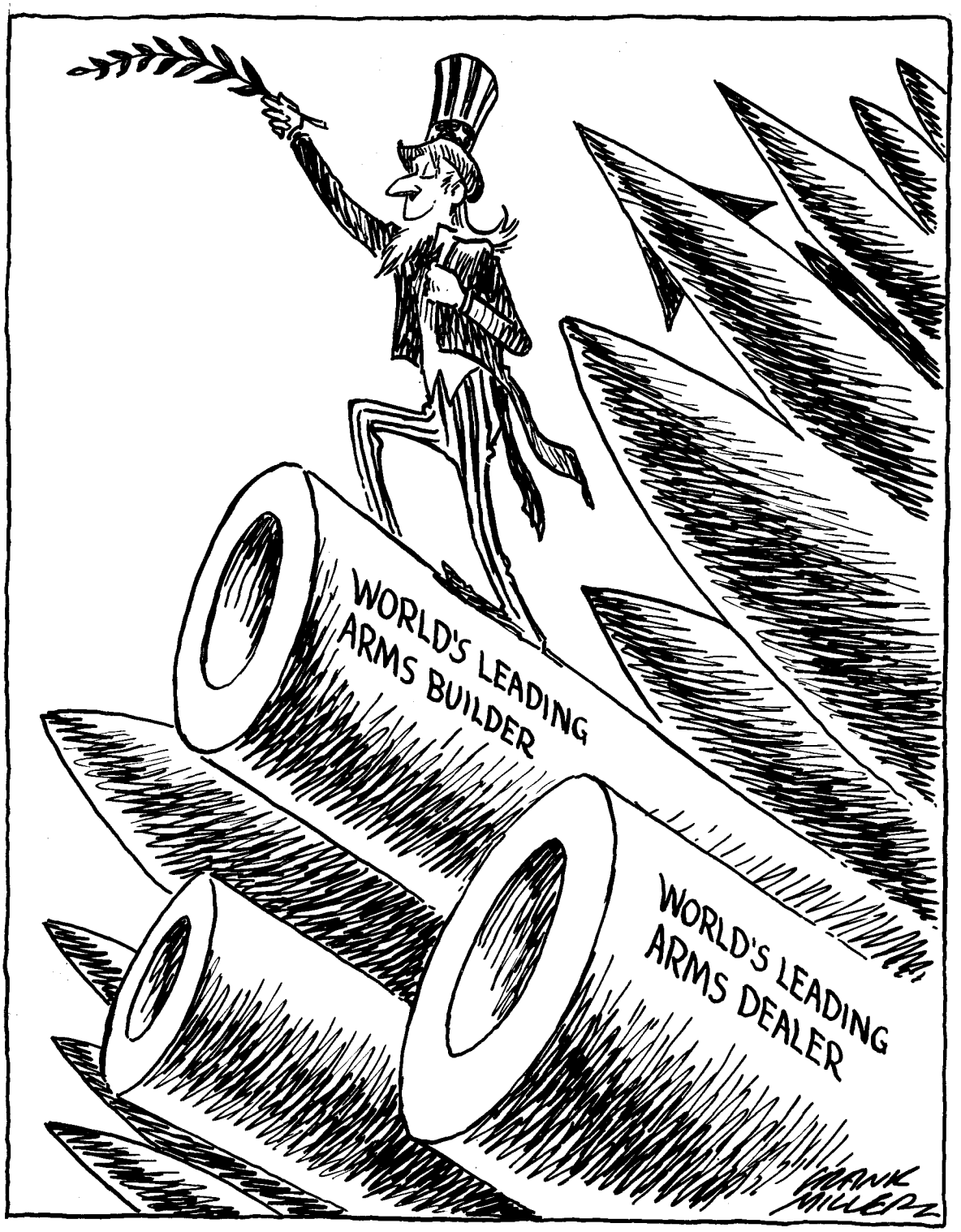
MAN OF PEACE



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LATIN AMERICAN REPORT

John Means

Political Kidnappings and Terrorism

Kidnappings and assassinations of local politicians and foreign diplomats represent the new brand of terrorism which has been sweeping much of Latin America for well over two years. Usually seeking the release of imprisoned revolutionary radicals, guerrilla groups have perfected the tactic of kidnapping, and the astonishing degree of success underscores the ease with which militant revolutionaries have been able to engage in anti-government activities. There is practically no evidence of an internationally-coordinated conspiracy, although the adjoining countries of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay have witnessed the greatest degree of terrorist activity. The violence in these nations (and in Guatemala) clearly suggests that terrorism is becoming an increasingly popular approach to the attainment of anti-institutional political objectives.

A summary of such activities during the past four years amply illustrates the recent intensification of this approach to revolution in Latin America. In 1967, subsequent to the chain of events which involved the deployment of the Marines to the Dominican Republic, a Dominican terrorist killed an American teacher. In 1968, Guatemala was the scene of two serious incidents when, in January, two U.S. military attachés were machine-gunned, and, in August, guerrillas killed the American Ambassador to Guatemala, John Gordon Mein. Also in 1968, Brazilian terrorists in October killed an American Army officer assigned to the U.S. Consulate General in Sao Paulo. In June, 1969, thirteen stores in Buenos Aires were set afire—and all were American-owned (principally by the Rockefeller family). Soon thereafter, also in Buenos Aires, an Argentine labor leader was murdered. In September, 1969, the most dramatic terrorist operation involved the kidnapping of the U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, C. Burke Elbrick. Abducted near the Embassy in downtown Rio, he was held for more than two weeks, until the Brazilian government acceded to the demands of the kidnappers, including the release of fifteen leftist prisoners who were flown to political asylum in Mexico.

In 1970, the kidnappings continued, and in March the Japanese Consul General in Sao Paulo was taken prisoner by a terrorist group demanding (and obtaining) the release of five jailed guerrillas. Also in March, the U. S. Air Attaché and a labor attaché were kidnapped and ransomed in Guatemala for several political prisoners. The following month, the West German Ambassador to Guatemala was kidnapped, and when the Guatemalan government announced its refusal to free the prisoners demanded by the kidnappers, the Ambassador was murdered. In Brazil, also in April of 1970, the U.S. Consul in Pôrto Alegre narrowly escaped an attempted kidnapping. In May, Argentine revolutionaries kidnapped and assassinated a former President, Pedro Aramburu. The following month, *another* West German Ambassador was abducted by Brazilian terrorists who demanded (and once again obtained) the freeing of 40 imprisoned revolutionaries (flown to Algeria). In August, a triple kidnapping was successfully engineered by a Uruguayan leftist guerrilla group known as the Tupamaros. An agronomist, an expert in police and security measures (both assigned to the American AID mission in Montevideo), and the Brazilian Consul General in Montevideo, were almost simultaneously abducted. In return for the three hostages, the Tupamaros demanded the release of 160 revolutionaries from various Uruguayan prisons. When the government refused, Daniel Mitrione, the American police expert, was killed—while the fate of the other two remained in doubt. In Chile, only a few days prior to the October 24th Congressional certification of the presidential election victory of Salvador Allende, the Commander of the Chilean Army (Gen. René Schneider) was killed by militants. (Though whether this instance of terrorism was the product of the far-left or far-right is in doubt, in view of the Marxist coloration of the President-elect.)

Viewed collectively, these incidents illustrate the pervasiveness of anti-government terrorism and the general success with which it has been employed. Unfortunately, the kidnappers' blackmail has been, on the whole, successful. Political prisoners by the dozens have been flown to asylum in Mexico and Algeria, and fears persist in Washington and the

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capitals of Latin America that this fact will encourage further kidnapping, murder, robbery, arson, and hijacking. As has been illustrated from Argentina to Quebec, there are certainly enough targets from which to choose. Furthermore, despite the normal human aversion to violence and bloodshed, it is feared by many (especially by Brazilian officials) that far-leftist revolutionaries may become popular heroes. The public is, in large measure, aware of terrorist successes, and even Che Guevara became a legendary figure quite irrespective of the ineptitude and failures which studded his revolutionary career in South America.

Terrorism on a mass scale is relatively more recent to Argentina and Uruguay than is the case in Brazil, in which hyper-leftist anti-government discontent dates from the anti-Communist revolt of 1964. In neighboring Uruguay, a relatively small republic approximately the size of Missouri and once known as the "Switzerland of the Western Hemisphere", armed extremists are engaged in nothing less than open warfare, according to the nation's Minister of Defense. The now-famous Tupamaros, once viewed as a gallant band of visionaries and romantics, have brought new dimensions of meaning to concepts of kidnapping and urban guerrilla warfare. Formed in 1962 and initially concerned principally with anti-government propaganda, the Tupamaros have now switched to multiple bombings in Montevideo, bank robberies, and bold assassinations. Even high schools are periodically terrorized with the disruption of classes, while teen-agers—girls as well as boys—are prepared by the Tupamaros for "careers" in the organization. Training exercises for the youthful recruits include such operations as the temporary kidnapping (for perhaps only a couple of hours) of motorists at random.

Murders have been frequent and varied, ranging from police (including Montevideo's police inspector) to military personnel and government officials. Raids on military installations have netted the Tupamaros a veritable arsenal of rifles, ammunition, and electronic equipment. Commenting on that fact, one of Montevideo's leading newspapers noted that the Tupamaros were, in reality, the most powerful regiment in Uruguay. However, certain organizational weakness would seem to stem from internal dissension of an ideological nature. The Uruguayan terrorists are united only by a common desire to overthrow the government.

Across the Rio de la Plata, terrorists have created a confusing multiplicity of Argentine extremist organizations which, like their Uruguayan counterparts, are unified only by a common dedication to the destruction of the military regime of President Livingston. Their activities, too, include attacks on army posts, frequent bombings, robberies, and occasional kidnappings. Due to the variety and amorphous nature of most of Argentina's extremist groups—plus the general inefficiency of the police and military intelligence services—the prevailing confusion has severely limited the number of arrests. Argentine terrorists, in fact, are apprehended—if at all—as a result of their own miscalculations, or by sheer chance. A relatively large "bomb factory" was discovered by the authorities only when it exploded accidentally.

It is virtually impossible to determine precisely the number of viable terrorist groups in Argentina, but there appear to be at least five or six. Activists, as with similar groups in Uruguay and Brazil, are drawn primarily from earlier radical groups, with an apparently increasing number of recruits from the traditional political parties. While they share similar views regarding revolutionary tactics, the thin veneer of ideology sometimes cracks under the stress of conflicting strategies. The Communist Party of Argentina, for instance, is in general opposition to the employment of armed revolt, while the younger groups usually endorse violence as a cardinal doctrine. Although the degree of collaboration among the various organizations is unknown, even as pertains to such stunning successes as the kidnapping of former President Aramburu, it is presumed that no unified command exists. For that, if for little else, the Argentine government may be grateful.

In any detailed commentary on Latin America's kidnappings and related forms of anti-government terrorism, Brazil can (virtually *must*) be used as the foundation for both descriptive and analytical evaluation. Quite irrespective of the fact that Brazil's terrorists have been conducting—with typical Brazilian flair—the hemisphere's most extensive and diversified operations, the sheer vastness of Brazil sets it apart from the Spanish American republics. Comprising about half of the area and population of the South American continent, Brazil is a federal republic of over 94 million inhabitants—ranking as the earth's eighth most populous nation (and fifth in area). Indeed, it has been acknowledged by the U.S. Department of State that a chronically unstable Brazil would constitute a greater threat to peace and progress in this hemisphere than would a half-dozen Cubas.

The conditions which prevail in Brazil could be considered a latent civil war situation; a more or less chronic paramilitary confrontation between the country's police and military forces, and a collection of leftist opposition organizations. The Brazilian government's anti-terrorist activities, often dictated by the circumstances of the moment, are under the jurisdictions of both federal and local military and police. At the highest level, the national military police control the formulation of long-range strategy, supported by the federal civil police, the National Investigation Service (a counter-espionage agency), and the police units of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. At the state level (Brazil is composed of 22 states), there are quasi-military uniformed police forces, and at the local level, the major cities have established specialized units for the apprehension and interrogation of prisoners.

Frequently, there exist in major metropolitan areas an assortment of unofficial anti-revolutionary groups

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composed of ex-policemen, military personnel, etc., for which there are no formal records. These vigilante platoons, established to combat various militant anti-social elements (as thus perceived), identify themselves with such vivid names as "The Death Squadron", and they appear to specialize in the brutal interrogation of their prisoners, allegedly kidnapping individuals suspected of having knowledge of terrorist operations (especially diplomat kidnappings, bank robberies, and arson). In addition to an intelligence gathering function, their activities are aimed at intimidation, as illustrated by the fact that a murdered victim will frequently be found with a note identifying the responsible group. Although the Brazilian government has officially condemned such activities—even when directed against apparent enemies of the regime—there seems to be a *de facto* immunity from effective counteraction, perhaps due to the relative effectiveness of these "death squadrons" in uprooting urban terrorists.

In opposition to the various strata of government forces and unofficial anti-leftist bodies, militant extremists are organized into small independent groups which recruit from universities, certain religious orders, trade unions, banned political parties, and even the liberal professions. If it is difficult to describe the structure of the government's internal security forces, it is virtually impossible to identify the structure of the active leftist/radical/terrorist/guerrilla opposition. In the Rio and Sao Paulo urban complexes, guerrilla units operate as a veritable army of liberation, with trained cadres totalling as many as 800 men and women. Secondary underground movements, somewhat more pacific, draw members from Catholic youth organizations, and have a particular appeal to the young idealists of the banned National Students' Union (UNE). From time to time, brief strikes are organized in factories or schools, and propaganda leaflets are occasionally distributed which explain such occurrences as the killing of a police official or the kidnapping of a diplomat. A conglomeration of *sub rosa* groupings, independent of one another except for their opposition to the military government, have disrupted domestic security sufficiently to justify the Brazilian government's claim that the nation is threatened with internal warfare.

In addition to the continuing threat to public order and safety, the government has, on several occasions, suffered the international humiliation of a kidnapping by which Brazil was forced to "pay" for the release of the diplomat through the freeing of jailed terrorists. That, in itself, would justify the government's relentless campaign against the covert operations of the subversive left. Undoubtedly, the most spectacular Brazilian kidnapping (from the U.S. point of view) involved the abduction of Ambassador Elbrick in September, 1969. In addition to successfully engineering the freedom of fifteen jailed compatriots, the terrorists also won international attention. They had proven, indisputably, their ability to direct the kidnapping of the most important foreign diplomat in the nation.

The Brazilian military government has intensified its campaign to exterminate the country's revolutionaries, and the most notable success was the ambush and killing, in late 1969, of Carlos Marighela—a charismatic leader of Brazil's radical-left. After Marighela was removed from the scene by government agents, there was a lessening of the incidence of terrorist strikes against established authority. An advocate of violent methods, and an avowed Communist of the Peking variety, Marighela was the only revolutionary leader of the late 1960s with the ability to unite Brazil's splintered radical left, if only temporarily. Shortly before his death, he wrote that "what is essential is the basic definition of a guerrilla, a man who acts against hunger, misery and injustice." If that appears to be obscure or politically unrealistic, it nonetheless served admirably to unite diverse elements discontent with the present Brazilian social and political structures. For a brief period, Marighela was able to establish a form of unified guerrilla command. Notwithstanding that, though, terrorist activities throughout Latin America are characterized by an ever-increasing proliferation of groups and "movements" with differing—or conflicting—ideologies. Radical organizations may find a philosophical foundation in Catholicism, Castroism, or almost anything in between. Indeed, ideological conflicts are not uncommonly found within a single terrorist cell, thereby severely limiting the operational effectiveness of the unit.

When speaking of Brazilian—or Latin American—leftist revolutionary insurgency, the extremely heterogeneous nature of the movements makes it difficult to establish a working definition which is more precise than the simple observation that terrorism, as recognized, stems directly from conditions favoring revolt or insurrection falling short of civil war. In Brazil, as has been illustrated, terrorism in its various manifestations includes the full spectrum of conflict and violence, ranging from individual acts (*e.g.*, bombings and hijackings) to guerrilla warfare (generally limited to the countryside). Despite occasional protestations to the contrary, the objective of terrorist insurgency is political: aiming at the eventual overthrow of the government and the subsequent seizure of power. Also, there is the parallel goal of remodeling the socio-economic structure of the nation, and the Cuban example is commonly regarded as the Latin American prototype. In a continuing effort to understand the causes of revolutionary terrorism, thus shaping consequent action, the military (in Brazil and elsewhere) is engaged in an elaborate study of the multitude of factors which contribute to chronically disruptive conditions. Almost all Latin American states, including Brazil, have yet to achieve completely self-sustaining economic growth, and most of this hemisphere is engaged in a protracted struggle for economic modernization and political "identity." Recognizing this, Brazilian government political analysts theorize that this struggle has profoundly disturbed the internal

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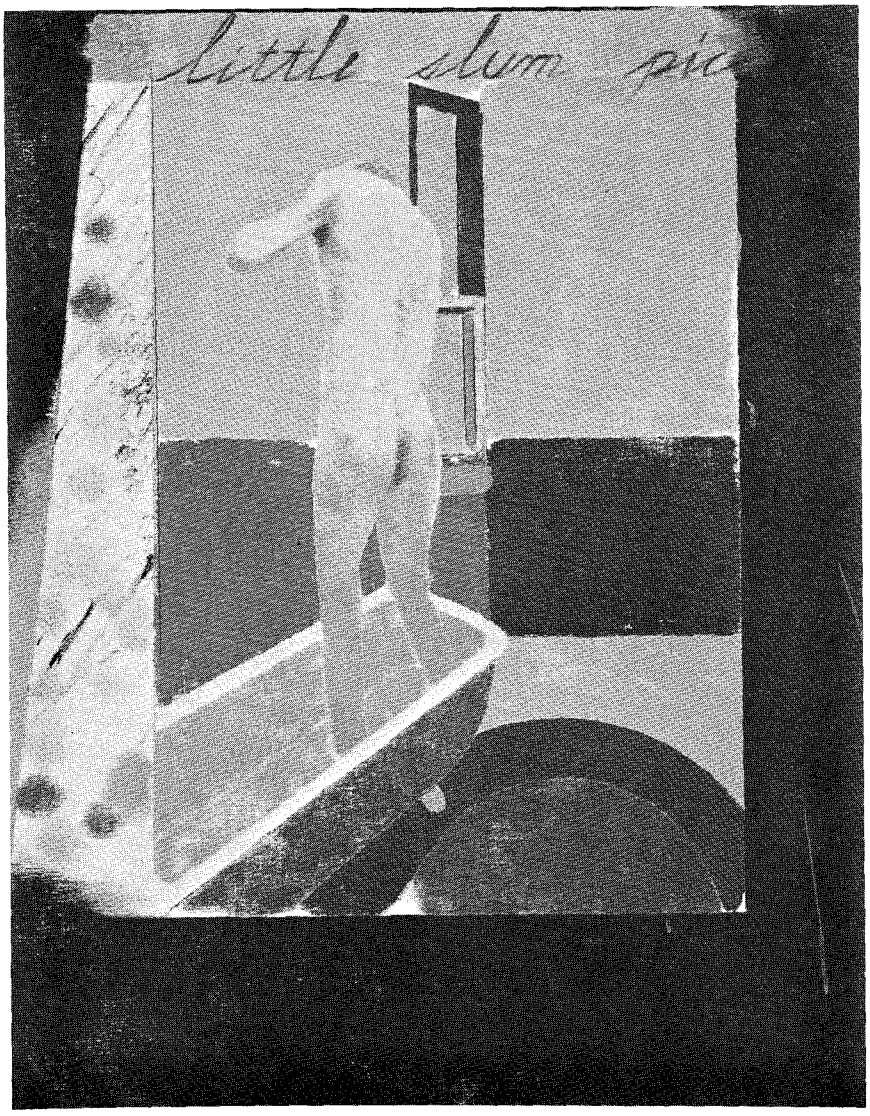
equilibrium, thereby making the nation vulnerable to disorders generated internally. Viewed in this light, kidnappings, political assassinations, and kindred actions are part of the much larger problem of the national modernization process in the developing areas of the world. Pursuing this a bit further, one can readily observe that population growth is exceeding economic gains in several Latin American countries, since population is outstripping resources which are not growing proportionately because capital formation is still inadequate. However, conditions have begun to improve for the masses, and revolutionary activity does not occur because of flaws in the society, as Castro's disciples would contend, but rather, because there is *enough* progress to arouse mass expectations.

Within the various military regimes in Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and others), the attitude seems to prevail that this aptly named "revolution of rising expectations," or rising demands, is the product of an accelerating pace of economic change. The inevitable process of modernization therefore encourages demands which engender political instability, as traditional stabilizing influences are disrupted by the move toward a new and "modern" value system. In conditions of political flux, demagoguery is most likely to flourish. The politically unsophisticated peoples of modernizing societies are generally incapable of comprehending the hard realities of this slow and arduous process of national development. Thus, according to Brazil's leaders, a truly operable democratic political system—immune to the threats posed by terrorists—requires a literate and socially responsible public, as well as politicians with the desire and ability to be skillful statesmen rather than government payroll hangers-on or mere party hacks.

Brazilian terrorists have intensified long-standing fears that the revolutionary doctrines of Castro and Guevara, with their Brazilian disciples, are creating conditions of political opportunism and demagogic irresponsibility by capitalizing on the resentments of those sectors of society which have never enjoyed the confidence of the Armed Forces. (The Brazilian Army's mistrust of labor leaders, most student organizations, and liberal "writers" has never been very well concealed.) Hence, the military presumes that if it is to protect Brazil from revolution, there are certain elements which require careful scrutiny, and in the case of radical leftists, corrective measures (allegedly including torture) are deemed necessary and appropriate. To the "hard liners" in Brasilia, it does not seem illogical to maintain law and order by stepping outside of the strictly defined limits of the law, since a slavish adherence to legal formalities in a time of crisis would not necessarily serve the cause of national well-being. Such theories on the rôle of government are a clear response to radical leftist activists intent on exacerbating that political instability which is endemic to the Latin American social order. At this point, it is virtually impossible to determine whether the upsurge in terrorism, in Brazil and elsewhere, is a permanent ingredient of the kaleidoscopically complex political equations of the late twentieth century. However, it is already becoming quite apparent that individual liberties and constitutionally guaranteed civil rights are suffering, at least temporarily, from a frenzy of counterinsurgency activity which could become a more ominous threat to functioning democracy than the terrorist ills which it seeks to eliminate.



R. B. KITAJ
"Little Slum Pic" (1968)
Courtesy of Marlborough Gallery, New York

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Miss Magid was for several years the Literary Editor of THE REPORTER. *She continues to live in New York, in a neighborhood whose toughness strengthened her in her reading of the magazines she discusses below.*

Nora L. Magid

THE HEART, THE MIND, THE PICKLED OKRA: Women's Magazines in the Sixties

Jackie Kennedy was like a sister to me, and neither time nor distance can erase the memories of the years we shared together. I wish her happiness and all good things. I cannot express how much she has enriched my life by letting me put one foot in Camelot."

The lady's other foot is parked firmly in her mouth. Jacqueline Kennedy, having refused to perpetuate her own myth—she did, in effect, run off with Eddie Fisher—has become fair game, and Mary Barelli Gallagher, one of an army of former employees with a yen to spill the beans, explodes with secrets: "I'll never forget the first time she wanted me to make an appointment for her with her New York hairdresser, Kenneth, for a hair straightening, shampoo and set. The 'hair-straightening' part took me by surprise. Jackie, I had always thought, had a lovely natural line to her hair. Why would she want to have it straightened? Yet the receptionist at Kenneth's confirmed that Jackie was, indeed, going to have her hair *straightened!* Beauty was important to Jackie. She had the little dark hairs on her arms bleached. She used Sardo bath oil and a medicinal-type liquid cleanser, Phiso-hex."

Many of the titillating revelations are second-hand, and Provi, the maid, is the unwitting source: (1) "Mees Kennedee like nice, fresh sheets"; (2) "Oh yes, Mees Gallaga, Mees Kennedee likes to find her stockings in nice, neat pile in her closet"; and (3) after the J. F. Kennedy funeral, the punch-line, "Oh, Mees Gallaga, that's Onassee, the millionaire."

Mrs. Gallagher says that Jackie's mother said that when Jackie bent over, you could see her garters at the top of her hose. And Jack said that Jackie was extravagant, and Jackie said, "Gosh, I guess Jack was real-l-y upset, wasn't he?" to which Mrs. Gallagher said, " 'Well, Jackie, I don't mind so much his being upset. It's just that I'm always in the middle.' She apologized." And when Jackie and Mrs. G. have a squabble, Mrs. G. says, " 'And Jackie, the one thing I'd like to ask now is that you never speak to me that way again. I was never more hurt or humiliated.' She apologized again, asking that we just forget the whole thing." Good old Walter Mitty.

Now the Sixty-Four Dollar Question is: Who wants to read such trash? The answer is everybody. We all live two lives, our own and that of the Kennedys, and the above, good for plenty of mileage in every newspaper in the country, was also presumably good for business—for *Ladies' Home Journal* business, that is. Given the insatiable appetite of the public for Kennedy material, the saga had run a predictable course even before calamity befell Teddy. The media created the Kennedys; and up to a point the media collaborate just as cheerfully in their destruction. Over the past ten years, there has hardly been an issue of a women's magazine without one story and sometimes two on the family; and each periodical has to some extent defined them in its own terms. *The Journal* (mass circulation) capitalizes on that fascination with and animosity toward the rich and the powerful that is inherent in Americans. *Vogue*, on the other hand, wealthy and snobbish, once unblushingly captioned a portrait of Mrs. Kennedy, "J.B.K. . . . . *the American woman*, a creature possessed of thoughtful responsibility, a healthy predilection for the good and the beautiful and the expensive."

When the Kennedys were in the White House, Jackie was celebrated as a wife and mother. (First Ladies are *always* celebrated. Mrs. Nixon is now described as "delectable.") As a widow, even when her actual participation in an event was minimal, Mrs. Kennedy garnered still more attention. In 1968, for instance, *The Journal* featured an encounter between Mrs. Medgar Evers and Mrs. Kennedy at the service for Martin Luther King. "It was then that I remembered Jacqueline Kennedy and, rising, went to her. I murmured my name, and she gasped, 'Oh, my goodness!' and took my hand. We stood like that for a moment, and I thought I could see in her eyes what I knew must be in my own: the sense that we, who had both been through this before, were here together seeing a third woman stricken in the same way." This sad

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little two-column piece was flanked on the one side by an advertisement for a vaginal douche, and on the other by one for a deodorant—"Aren't you glad you use Dial Soap! (Don't you wish everybody did?)"

Most of the material reads like bad fiction, and the dialogue seems all to have come from the same hand. In one story, when a "little nun" bumps into Janet Auchincloss at Newport, she grabs her and blurts out, "Oh, you're Mrs. Kennedy's *mother!* Oh, Mrs. Auchincloss, I just want to tell you how much we all love Jackie Kennedy!" "Smiling, with that perfect poise and grace for which Auchinclosses are famous, Janet Auchincloss replied, 'And so do we.' "

In another, the First Lady arrives, "breathlessly, in a gentle flurry. She stood in the doorway poised as if for flight. Tall, slender and glowing . . . The President glanced up, drew a quick breath and stubbed out his cigar. 'Darling, I've never seen you look so lovely,' he said in a low voice. 'Your dress is beautiful!' " (The I've-never-seen-you-look-so-lovely formula is frequently encountered, both in and out of fiction. Lyn Tornabene in an article on Sidney Poitier, uses almost the same words, and also spells out the requisite explanation. Ladies' magazines are nothing if not explicit. "I have never seen him so beautiful as I saw him in Nassau . . . . perhaps it is simply Success . . . . And I say to you, humbly, that I was privileged to observe this vision because Sidney and I are friends.")

Jackie's mother, Jackie's sister, Jackie's dead father, Jackie's children, Jackie's priest (A Christmas letter to My Dear Children of God from Cardinal Cushing), Jackie's in-laws all get into the act. These magazines run on the obvious principle of Rabbit's Friends and Relations: Eunice Shriver is organized motherhood's answer to militant feminists; Joan Kennedy is said to bear a resemblance to her heroic sister-in-law, Jacqueline (this was Before the Fall); and Ann Gargan is the Kennedy Nobody Knows.

Since First Ladies are always in—this is complicated by the fact that Kennedys stay in—we have the Johnsons overlapping the Kennedys, and now the Nixons overlapping the Kennedys. *McCall's* cornered the Johnson market by hiring Lynda Bird at an inflated salary to burble about sororities, nature trips, and what people, including her parents, should give one another for Christmas. Meanwhile, John F. Kennedy's posthumous life continues; some time ago, *The Journal* commissioned an atrocious series of paintings to be donated to the Memorial Library. In one, Jacqueline is in an orange canopied bed, holding Baby Caroline, who bears a remarkable resemblance to a duckbilled platypus, while Smilin' Jack, clutching a single rose, looks on. He faces her. She and Caroline face front (the camera, the artist, the audience).

And Nurse Maud Shaw wrote of her life with Caroline and John-John: "For Mrs. Kennedy I always had respect and admiration, all the greater after her husband's death, when I saw how she overcame her tremendous grief to build her life anew." This lady has now had prosperous afterthoughts, and is indicating loudly that Jacqueline was really bad-tempered, a bad mother, bad everything.

When Robert Kennedy was killed, the magazines had another bonanza. It takes three or four months usually for such an event to reach print — hitched to the fashion field, they have a lead time of unusual duration. *McCall's* hired a psychiatrist to examine the reactions of the Kennedy children under stress, and on the unabashed evidence of clips, he came up with such insights as "Joseph's behavior [while guarding his father's casket] seems to show that he had full, conscious access to his tortured feelings and, unlike many youths of his generation, chose not to turn off and drop out."

The oddest Kennedy material was the appearance in *McCall's* of Robert Kennedy's book on the Cuban missile crisis. It was an inappropriate medium for it, and the well-publicized bid of a million dollars, particularly since it was made by an editor known for urging his budgeting readers to contribute to worthy causes, was inflationary and senseless.

With her remarriage, Jackie entered another phase, good for replenished speculation. Lord Harlech, whose family had previously received billing, was out, and Onassis and children and ex-wife were in. *McCall's* spoke of the union of "the living legend in her own lifetime" and Onassis as the union of "the beautiful, clever, intellectual, artistic Athena" and "the dynamic Poseidon, 'god of the sea and of everything liquid.' "

Because she was a long-time subscriber, Mrs. Johnson's advent to the White House was cause for rejoicing, again at *McCall's*. "That's what's wonderful about being a women's magazine. It is always involved in the flow of current history, but it also operates in areas (the heart, the mind, the pickled okra) that unite all women, whether their addresses are Main Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, or Park — and whether they vote Republican, Democratic, or even straight Vegetarian."

Lynda Bird went to work for and became engaged in the pages of *McCall's*, which had previously praised her for being a fine horsewoman, promising photographer, voracious reader and brilliant student. But her personal beautification, while she was still under the influence of George Hamilton, took place in *The Journal*, and the makeup artist was credited with saying, "I can't honestly say I was thrilled with the finished product. A face is a face to me, and I never really get excited by my work." Luci discussed her conversion in *The Journal*, and Luci and Pat in an "unprecedented joint interview" talked also in *The Journal* about life without father, and about living on Pat's salary; they had already chattered in *McCall's* about Pat's money. "He wouldn't think of it any other way." And Barbara Howar, dropped by the Johnsons, denounced both girls in *The Journal* as having a "franchise on sibling rivalry," concentrated considerable venom on Lynda ("an awkward and sometimes surly girl who hid behind her image of the young intellectual"), and added for good measure that Lynda had draped herself "around George Hamilton like a fox fur." Of the President she said that when the soup arrived at

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dinner one night, "He never put his spoon in it, but turned to Mrs. Johnson and suggested that she keep her hot dish water in the kitchen where it could be put to better use."

When Lynda married Charles Robb, her young sister-in-law, Trenny, was briefly a viable product. In a fashion spread, *The Journal* exulted, "Trenny's flashed on the screen like quicksilver. Her charisma, the kind that makes heroes and heroines overnight. There's no doubt about it, Trenny's going places — from hometown Milwaukee to a career in fashion, U.S.A."

Well, Trenny was never heard from again, but that's all right, because along came Julie Nixon. David and Julie want to pass as typical students, but they seem to live in a building previously restricted to faculty, and they happen to have new things like Lenox china at $540 a setting, and such hand-me-downs as "a gold velvet sofa, two English eighteenth century side tables, and a black lacquered oriental cocktail table that Madame Chiang Kai-shek gave to Mr. Nixon when he was Vice-President." *McCall's* reveals that when Julie was still living on campus, her room-mates asked a girl with a Humphrey sticker on her door to remove it; and when the college paper went into mourning over Nixon's election, Julie's housemother wrote, "Your lack of taste and good manners will never increase your husbands' status symbol in the business world." (I think I know what the lady is driving at; I hesitate to think that this kind of syntax prevails at Smith.)

McCall's weighs against the young Eisenhowers a sob story about a struggling Smith-Amherst couple whose parents pay only their tuition, rent, board, and not much more. (This may not sound precisely like lack of subsidy, but then women's magazines are put out by editors with expense account mentalities who are more likely than not to tell their readers to take a taxi to Katz' delicatessen.) The young Swansons want to meet the young Eisenhowers. *McCall's* concludes philosophically that "The Eisenhowers and the Swansons have radically different styles of life now, and their lives probably always will be dissimilar. David Eisenhower is much more likely to be rich than is Bob Swanson. David, some people think, will even be President. But sitting in their farmhouse, surrounded by fields, Bob and Barbara have something that Julie and David want and can probably never possess. They have their privacy."

David's granny also is back in the picture, and Mamie Eisenhower's family pastor speaks of her faith, which he detects in all aspects of her being: "She is always impeccably groomed and there is never any concealment or artificiality in her makeup or wardrobe. Never a victim of capricious turns in fashion, she is nevertheless fashionable. In some ways, she sets the tone and mood. Everything about her combines to let her natural loveliness come through . . . Duty, honor, country were her commitments, as surely as if she had picked up the phrases at West Point."

So much for American royalty. It is all the usual mindless mixture of public relations and invention. When it comes to real royalty, a lot of effort is expended to prove that they are even as you and I. *They* go to the *bathroom* — though, having been born British, I don't really believe it. In a *McCall's* two part series on Princess Margaret, in 1965, it was reported that Tony had once rented a place in which to court his girl. The owner suspected that something was up, because he suddenly found that his rusty john was perfumed, and "a most expensive-looking roll of ultra-soft violet-tinted tissue" substituted for his "cheap, utility toilet paper." Then a whole new bathroom was installed, and while Tony gave the handle a ceremonial pull, the princess "cut the bright-blue ribbon," and they all drank to "the great and glorious future of our loo." In September of 1965, in *The Journal*, the princess' own house was delineated; "The bathrooms are her current pride: Tony's is black and gold with an octagonal towel rack in the center; hers has red velvet walls and wall-to-wall carpeting."

Queen Elizabeth is a little more remote. One gathers from a vast collection of stories that she loves horses, dogs, strawberries and cream, economizing and punctuality. Then there is her "chuckly, blue-eyed" son, Prince Edward Antony Richard Louis: "the world's most famous baby . . . . sleeps soundly, a happy contented young man, who is seldom fretful, seldom heard to cry, and now, as he blinked into wakefulness at Nanny Anderson's touch, a chuckling smile of recognition creased the baby features." Finally, in 1969, in *The Journal*, we achieve intimacy. The bathroom is mentioned. We also learn that Philip—referred to elsewhere as "everything a prince should be"—snaps. Twice. "Prince Philip bathes and shaves to the musical accompaniment of a small transistor radio. He switches it on as soon as he gets out of bed and carries it around with him from bedroom to bathroom to dining room, though the music is less important to him than the occasional news bulletins. He sits down to breakfast in his bathrobe, a tall (6 feet, 1 inch), slim-hipped, athletic-looking man of 47 . . . . The value of their breakfast silverware alone runs into several thousand dollars. A twin to the Queen's silver teapot, for instance, was valued by experts at about $2,200." Note the passion for statistics, and the meaty dialogue. Philip snaps, "No toast." The Queen's personal footman, the writer of this earth-shattering piece, says, "I'll fetch it immediately." When he does, Philip snaps, "Too late, too late."

Women's magazines live in a world where everything is of the moment, where there is no tomorrow. When the young Queen of Greece is visited, the writer suggests that she is part of a fairy tale, "the beautiful princess marrying the handsome king and living happily ever after in a romantic land." She says no, "laughing in a delightful way to pooh-pooh the idea, 'that is sort of silly. One has always lived this way, and I don't think differently. It's not a fairy tale. This is our job, and we just do it.' " Shortly after John Kennedy's death, Perle Mesta wrote, "President Lyndon B. Johnson is going to be a marvelous President for at least the next five years,

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with his wonderful First Lady at his side to lend stalwart support." Audrey Hepburn in 1967 was "Audrey the teeny-bopper, romping along Riviera beaches, dashing in and out of boutiques, frugging in discothèques (wearing all new go-go goodies, but surrounded by old loves: her husband and Givenchy), falling into swimming pools." Audrey Hepburn in 1969, having made the mistake of aging two years, is an old lady. She is forty and in another marriage, "happy now—but with the wider-open eyes of an older woman . . . . How deep and knowing can be the love of the mature—the late, poetic blooming of an Antony and Cleopatra." In America, there is apparently no middle period; it is one swift jump from girlhood to antiquity. The article goes on to quote the new husband: "Her slender figure and fresh manner are charming and delightful. Big, buxom women never did especially appeal to me," and Miss Hepburn's characteristic ladies' magazine non sequitur rejoinder, "And I have married a man whose culture is unlimited and whose conversation is end-less-ly fascinating." The writer gets in a few more cracks about the actress' unfortunate infirmity: "Here the young couple—the phrase comes automatically, but can stand—spent the first week of their honeymoon," and "the eyes still open a bit too wide to express wonder. She still bites her lower lip in a gesture one finds charming in a teen-ager, but too cute for a woman of forty." Miss Hepburn is over the hill. Alas.

In *The Journal* in 1966, Elliott Gould told Gloria Steinem that his wife Barbra Streisand was "fragile and exquisite" and needed taking care of. In *The Journal* in 1969 he tells Diana Lurie in "a searching, almost psychoanalytic interview," that he does not think Barbra can help him. "Barbra is really 14 years old . . . Barbra's favorite subject is Barbra. It bugs me a lot, and I get bored by it sometimes." He says that she is disdainful of men and competitive, ambivalent, etc. etc. etc. Incidentally, he is spoken of as "still on his way up." His salary: only $210,000 p.a.

When it comes to Hollywood, the pattern is particularly clear. The movie magazine has been grafted onto the true confession magazine, and the rule for assignment is roughly crisis. If Pat Neal has a stroke, cover it. If Cary Grant gets another divorce, cover it. (Was it a Pygmalion relationship? Absolutely, completely, the fourth ex-wife admits.) If Helen Hayes moves to town, give her space to whoop, "I won't be able to walk with my poodle, Hoopla, up the silence of Hook Mountain any more. But I'll bet she adjusts beautifully to city living. And do you know what I say? I say 'Hooray!' "

Sophia Loren talks (everywhere) about the pain of losing her baby, and then talks (everywhere) about the pleasure of having a baby. Of Doris Day, the interviewer asks is she happy. "Has she found even a measure of contentment in her incredible success? Or has success only confused her, deepening those fears common to women everywhere about losing love and the advancing years." In a later piece, Miss Day guilelessly furnishes exercises for staying young, and concludes, "If you think an ugly thought, you're going to look ugly. (And it brings to mind my favorite quotation from Shakespeare, 'There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.')"

ROY LICHTENSTEIN
"Blond Waiting" (1964)
Collection: Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Weisman
Courtesy of Leo Castelli, New York

Princess Grace "looks" in every way "like a monarch." Nancy Sinatra *likes* Mia and thinks her "adorable with her hair cut short." As for Mia, when she "says 'Frank,' something happens. Bells ring. Whistles blow." Lee Bouvier talks about Truman Capote and Truman Capote talks about Lee Bouvier. Lauren Bacall, if she were president, would have Katharine Hepburn in her cabinet, "because she's a realist, with more character than anyone I've ever met." Miss Hepburn in turn does a word portrait of Miss Bacall (imagine a government report in this private language): "Love or Hate—Yes or No—Good or Bad—Victorian clarity—Soft—sun-serene surface—surface—surface—and under it—Woman."

Jean Shrimpton reflects candidly on her kind of world: "I'm not easily attracted to men . . . . Maybe I'm unusual, but I enjoy the more effeminate type of man for company and good conversation. They love taking pretty girls out, and really appreciate what we are wearing." And Judy Garland cries out, "Where are my friends now? I have few that I didn't pay for, and when the money ran out, they ran out, too. My fair-weather friends float out of my life when I'm in trouble."

The reader is invited to be not only Peeping Tom and voyeur, but also to exhibit. Send us your own love letters ($100—name withheld if desired); Send us a publishable true story on the turning point in your life. "You don't have to be a great writer, either." ($1,000); Send us your story about "a critical time or decision or moment of awareness that changed your thinking, deeply affected your marriage or family relationship, or in some other way altered the course of your life." ($1,000.)

Many of these contributors choose of course to speak about their children. And if one baby is of interest to all women, the assumption is that five babies must surely

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be fifty times as interesting. For a while, *McCall's* had the quintuplet concession, and with intrepid monomania, ran it straight into the ground. In October of 1963, the four surviving Dionnes (and their ghost) wrote of their infancy that "the smell of greed must have hung in the air like the odor of hot dogs and popcorn the peddlers sold to sightseers." They then disclosed that Dr. Dafoe had approved their being shipped out to a Chicago side-show. "Yes, go get all the money you can. They're going to die, anyway, and may as well die in Chicago as die here." Questions of authenticity aside—they are remembering verbatim what was said when they were newborn —anyone not blessed with a tin ear would tick off two American colloquial usages here, attributed to the Canadian doctor in the one statement.

In the second installment the quints, having exhausted the babyhood complaints, turned to preaching. "There are probably as many kinds of love as there are people who come to know its powers. To each, it dawns brand-new, as if it had been invented uniquely for oneself." They announce that "the world does not stop turning." (Now *there's* a thought.) "One's life continues, and each of us hopes to go on growing toward maturity. (Maturity is big in women's magazines.) "The future was once a frightening thing to contemplate. Now, if those close to us can be patient and we can hold on to what we have been granted, tomorrow is something to be dared."

In December, *McCall's* had another goodie; quints on the home side of the unguarded frontier. "On Saturday, September 14, the world at large had its opportunity to react . . . . Its response is history . . . . For the birth of five tiny babies—the first quintuplets to survive in the United States—is not merely a blessed event, but a rugged test of stability, integrity, decency." The town announced that it would "enjoy the benefits of the quints, but not exploit them." Meanwhile, part of the decency problem was the fact that *The Journal* claimed to have an exclusive on the quints the same month.

In February, 1964, the loose ends were tied together, and the four Dionnes wrote an Open Letter to the Five Fischers. To Dear All of You, from Us with our Love and in sincerity. The Dionnes began with regrets that they and the infants had not met; yet "it is better this way. If there is anything useful to be said, it is more easily done at a distance, though we hope you will feel we are not strangers," and worked up to the news that "quintuplets seem to bring out the best and the worst in people."

By the time *The Journal* again caught up with the Fischers in January of 1966, they were two years old, and their mother was adamant about calling them *babies*, not quintuplets, and about restating that she and her husband were "determined not to exploit their children." The article was preceded by a two page ad in which Elsie the Cow was greeting the quints, "every one a Borden's baby," and the banner headline read, Enter Borden's Quintuplets' Sweepstakes. First Prize: $25,000 cash . . . . Official entry blank, Mail to: hello there Fischer Quints! Box etc.

The Dionnes' letter to the Fischer tots was not the worst letter ever to appear in a magazine. There were lots of letters in women's magazines in the '60s. Scott Fitzgerald's to his daughter, letters from children to the White House begging for a puppy, Adlai Stevenson's letters from his mother, Dylan Thomas' love letters to his wife, and all of Lynda Bird Johnson's articles in *McCall's* that sounded like letters home. Norman Rosten wrote a letter to his dead friend Marilyn Monroe. "But after I write this imaginary letter to her, I reread a real postcard she wrote to me. Years ago. On one side, a large American Airlines jet in a blue sky. Her message, a single sentence: 'Guess where I am? Love Marilyn.' Then I smile and forgive her and wonder indeed where she might be." And Max Wylie addressed his murdered daughter directly. "So I say farewell, Janice, my darling. Thank you just for *being!* You were the larkish one; brave, merry, full of sun, full of song." But the worst letter—the very worst—was from Barry Goldwater to *his* daughter:

Dearest Joanne,

Those beautiful quaking aspens you have seen in the forests as we have driven along have one purpose in life. I want to tell you about them because they remind us a lot of Mommy and me and you kids . . . . Now think about Mommy and me as aspens standing there quaking our selfs in the winds that blow, catching the cold snows of life, bearing the hot rays of the sun, all to protect you from those things until you are strong enough and wise enough to do them yourself. We aren't quaking from fear but from the joy of being able to see your life develop.

II

Besides the cult of personality, what are women's magazines selling? The answer—again—is everything. The service area is a tricky one. It resembles the old one-room schoolhouse, in which the instructor had simultaneously to manage many learners at many stages. Some housekeepers are beginners, some have been at it for years. For each, different instructions need to be devised; and for all, convenience foods and new designs must be pushed. You may have a toaster, or even—heaven forfend—make toast in the oven; but suddenly daisies are in. "These peppy petals are spreading cheer over kitchen tools, ice buckets, pitchers, and even a toaster (by Toastmaster.)" You certainly must buy a blender, an electric can opener, an outdoor carpet. Since there are just so many ways to do a bird (and for some classic recipes like cream puffs there is just one method), the effort to achieve novelty, particularly at holidays, which have a way of recurring, may border on hysteria: "To make ye roast goose, as it's served at ye John Peel Inn, follow ye recipe below, plus ye spiced plums and plum sauce. Bet ye'll think it's dandy!"

Or, in wistful reminder that ordinary people tend to lead ordinary lives, "What's it like to feast like a star

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in the finest restaurants, the most glamorous hotels, with waiters bringing you such out-of-the-world food as chicken baked with green grapes, or lighting a flame beneath a fragrant, bubbling supper dish? How would you like to feed your children the same amusing frankfurter dishes the boys in *Oliver!* go for?" (The franks they go for are dipped in cheese-beer goo.)

Periodically, and in a rush of palpitation, the novice —new bride, new reader—is remembered, and she must be sold her rôle. (Black Studies programs teach Negroes to be Negroes; women's magazines teach women to be women), and the text, embroidered with steak knives, spatulas, and wooden spoons, reads, "You'll feel creative as an artist, precise as an engineer, with tools like these! Without them, you may as well give up being a joyous cook."

A columnist bleats, "Recently, I asked a visitor from abroad what were his impressions of America. 'I see a busy, active people,' he replied. 'Busy not merely with earning a living, but with enjoying living.' Then he added, 'Your huge volume of advertising has played a tremendous part in bringing all this about.' "

Promotion is then the primary business of the women's magazines, and like the networks they are first of all self-congratulatory. Every issue carries its built-in praise. They then praise all gadgets, cosmetics, detergents and cures, as well as whatever politics occupy the White House. Now many appliances are irrelevant, many mixes are filled with chemicals, many cosmetics and detergents prove harmful, and obviously vary in quality and in effect. Many pharmaceutical developments, inadequately tested, turn out to be premature and/or dangerous. Crackpot diets are regularly endorsed (Joseph Alsop, for instance, raved about the efficacy of the Air Force Diet; it was four years before *McCall's* mentioned in an article by an expert on nutrition that it was unbalanced and hazardous.) The pill was widely heralded as effective and "perfectly safe." It is only recently after irresponsible hard sell tactics that it is intimated that well, there just might be side-effects.

The medical columns, a feature of all women's magazines, are like nothing under the sun. There are usually some straightforward simple-minded questions, and the answer to these is usually run, do not walk to the nearest psychiatrist. Occasionally, there is a real block-buster: "The external genitalia of our baby appear different from those of our other children. In fact, there seems to be a mixture of male and female organs. At birth, the female organ was dominant. Now my husband and I are puzzled and worried because the male organ seems to be growing longer. Should we let things go and let nature take its course, or is there anything that could be done medically?" (For answer, see *McCall's*, January, 1964.)

Women's worries are ticked off, and they are manifold; How to save your marriage if you are an oversolicitous mother, are cheating your creative talent, have trouble-making neighbors, collect injustices; if your husband is impotent, jealous, rude, stingy, a perfectionist, a gambler, a drunk. What to do if you outgrow one another. How to define femininity, how to define masculinity. "Appreciation of artistic experiences is in no way the sole province of the female. By the same token, enjoyment of sports is not necessarily indicative of a man's masculinity."

There are horoscopes for weight-watching, spring-cleaning, job-hunting, budget-keeping. Readers can also learn vicariously what it is like to be a widow, or have cancer or whatever the disease-of-the-month is. And if they persist in telling their troubles at the beauty parlor, *McCall's* psychiatrist-in-residence is permissive. He hopes "that informal care-givers, like hairdressers and bartenders would read columns like this, and increase their understanding of common life predicaments in other ways, so that their counsel would be more consistently sensible."

Fashion is, of course, another commodity. Here the aim is to make everyone look alike, and there are complicated tie-ins with tourism bureaus, resorts, airlines, name brands and anyone's fame. In one layout, to indicate how much lovelier she could be, a bouffant hairdo, colorless makeup and mini skirt are superimposed on a photograph of Queen Elizabeth. She looks ridiculous. In another, a literary touch is lent by Harper Lee, who has a snippety text on the discovery of America by two small foreign children. They take her tour, show off their brand name clothes, and end up in various sets of American arms—those of Hubert Humphrey, Lynda Bird, the Nelson Rockefellers, George Murphy, Casey Stengel, and Colonel John H. Glenn, Jr.

These itty bitty paragraphs have always been popular. Harlan Miller used to whip up regular batches for *The Journal*. Once he said, "If a wife can manage to look cute or winsome while needling her husband, she can look cute saying *anything!*" A while later he said, "My Dream Girl thinks there *is* a cute way to needle a husband—by sitting on his lap to do it." Then there were Chanel's thoughts on the order of "Between madness and poetry is a thin piece of paper." And now there is Lyn Tornabene using the format to tell how much the astronauts' houses cost ($61,000), which wives dress like Mrs. Nixon, Mrs. Onassis and Mrs. Edward Kennedy, and which moon person "wears Brut and can be sniffed before seen." The advent of NASA has also brought a spate of new layout gimmicks—space foods and space clothes. Kicky culottes give you "a chance to soar off into a new fashion orbit, wearing the kinds of clothes that make you feel as free and weightless as a space-walker."

Editorially, these periodicals are subject to a peculiar schizophrenia. They are assembled piecemeal, the assumption is that they will be read piecemeal, and no one seems to check for discrepancies. On one page there may be a lyric gush on where to fall in love in New York—in Central Park, "a huge greenery, with enchantments for the meditative, the athletic, the naturalistic," and on another page of the same issue a scare piece on how dangerous city parks are. The beauty column may be pushing curls—"you'll want to board the bandwagon

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early;" but every model in the rest of the magazine has dead straight hair. Or, in a tie-in with the release of a movie, Cecil Beaton writes of the omnipresent Miss Hepburn, "The 'Flemish' look without any eye make-up is going to be a surprise. Suddenly one realizes what a hard look the black liner gives the eye. Audrey's appearance without it will be quite a revolution and, let's hope, the end of all those black-eyed zombies of the fashion magazines." Predictably, this is followed by instructions for duplicating the My Fair Lady Eye: take a black pencil, a brown pencil, mascara, etc.

And through the earnest chockablock veneer, another disturbing double quality breaks through. For example, a certain pleasure in violence underlies that creepy gentility. Women are exorted to be kind and gentle, but in among the articles on French Provincial furniture, creative stitchery, and Poppy Cannon's Line-A-Day Meal-A-Day (the line for July 8, 1969, is "Life is just a leaf-lined bowl of cherries served for dessert with creamiest of cottage cheese") is another line: how to survive in the street. "Use them [fingernails] like claws, and aim for the face. Rip at your assailant's eyes. And if you find yourself twisting your fingernails into the sockets, don't be shocked. It's an honorable female reaction as old as time itself . . . kick him with all your might in the shins. And then grind your heel, with every bit of weight, into his instep. The agony will be something he'll remember to his dying day. He'll probably never accost another woman again." (I am not suggesting for a moment that women should not defend themselves. Of course they should. But it shouldn't be such *fun.*)

Women's magazines are expensive to put out. In the chatty section at the beginning of the issue, the editors are likely not only to romanticize themselves (we feel like Liza Elliott, the heroine of *Lady in the Dark;* obviously we don't feel like Liza Elliott, girl editor, or we would resign in favor of a man), but also to boast of their expenditures. Models are flown all over the world to be photographed against exotic backdrops. And for a clutch of pieces that might have been assembled from clips—to show that Prince Charles' investiture would be "a smash hit"—"our editors, authors, reporters, and emissaries covered thousands of miles, clocked scores of air hours and consumed uncounted dramamine pills." Authors are also well paid, and it is a truism that an excellent article may be prepared for an academic or professional journal for nothing, while something worthless in the popular press may command thousands, even hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The point should be made, however, that not all women's magazine prose is terrible. (The poetry is about crowded closets and thinning hair and *is* terrible.) Jean Kerr and Peg Bracken are funny women; and such disparate writers as Jessica Mitford, Jean Stafford, and Harvey Cox have written well and astringently in this medium. Michael Field for a while had an amusing and vitriolic column in *McCall's,* in which he dissected famous restaurants, taking them to task for tacky art, ludicrous hauteur, contemptuous service and horrible food. Part of the general problem is visual. When John W. Gardner writes on the abused child, the piece is sandwiched between a story about a clever lady who thinks that marriage is obsolete, and a Treasury of French Cooking. The layout tyrannizes the copy and it is difficult for material to sound serious when it does not look it, when on all sides it is hemmed in by ruffles and, in this particular case, ads for corn remover, hemmorhoid pain reliever and skin bleach. This problem defeats not only the writer, but also the New York reader, who must plough her way through the many alphabetized regional insert pages. Just trying to trace a story to its conclusion may be an exhausting and irritating exercise.

But the major difficulty is that most contributors confronted with a women's magazine turn to spongecake. This for example is from Max Lerner's think piece on the Taylor-Burton affair: "What the world has been watching, with attitudes ranging from compassionate sympathy to shocked outrage, and from absorption to bored indifference, is the urgencies of a tortured triangle hot on and off the marital grid. But amidst the daily spate of headlines, something has been lost, and I think it is something important. It is perspective that has been lost. Except in some of its outward aspects, it is not the new things in the Elizabeth Taylor story that are most worth attention, but the old elements of it that link it with other women and other men and other times, with people in the past who walked the same perilous path of the grand passion, and stumbled and often got bloodied in the process."

And Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., on FDR's Secret Romance, positively waffles: "a touching and innocent story . . . . Eleanor Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt and Lucy Mercer all emerge from the story with honor. And, if Lucy Mercer in any way helped Franklin Roosevelt sustain the fearful burdens of leadership in the Second World War, the nation has good reason to be grateful to her."

The case of Pauline Kael is instructive. Her career at *McCall's* lasted several months, and at least part of the time she managed to sound as if she were slumming. Having categorized a certain movie as "dull, complicated, pretentiously low-keyed," she added, "a reader may easily say, 'She doesn't like anything,' or 'She just doesn't like movies,' and start trying to figure out what's the matter with me." Shortly on the heels of this, Miss Kael pulled herself together and wrote of Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music,* "Even the monstrously ingenious technicians who made this movie couldn't put together a convincing mate for Super-Goody-Two Shoes. The dauntless heroine surmounts this obstacle: in the romantic scenes, she makes love to herself. And why not? We never believed for a moment that love or marriage would affect her or change her. She was already perfection."

In July of 1966, in Pats and Pans, there appeared a letter from Mrs. Paul Fisher of Redondo Beach, California, expressing "abysmal sadness that we are no longer to admire sweetness and light . . . . Many of us *are* nice,

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dull, schmaltzy people who feel there is virtue and deep satisfaction in self-control, integrity, and decency." Mrs. Fisher might have saved her breath to cool her dainty porridge. Miss Kael had already been fired.

Anyone who has ever been a literary editor knows that a lot of good fiction is circulated that never gets to see the light of publication. It is right only for women's magazines, and women's magazines do not print it. For fiction, *McCall's* has a large staff. Since all of *McCall's* fiction is by Barbara Robinson, one wonders what the fiction staff does. In the past few years, Miss Robinson has had at least eighteen short stories here, and has also made guest appearances elsewhere. The titles speak for themselves: Three to Make A Marriage, Something Very Much in Common, Someone to Love, Beyond this Moment. Defining her own technique in *The Writer*, Miss Robinson has said that it is her aim to write "an interesting story in which something happens to affect believable people." This is modest enough, and hers is a world in which there are blushes, tears, and much melting into the arms of the other. Sample: "Anne knew herself to be a worrier, a maker of lists, a hewer to schedules, but she had to be. How else could she keep her head above the tides of car pools and Scout troops and dentist appointments and Red Cross drives and—oh, everything?"

"Almost Any Friday" (*McCall's*, June, 1969), a typical story, is prefaced by a teaser to entice the skimmer: "Rob was in love, his parents supposed, but his plans were suspiciously vague. Did he really *want* to get married? For that matter does *any* young man?"

The fiction not written by Barbara Robinson *sounds* as if it had been written by Barbara Robinson. In *McCall's* for August, 1969, is Evan Hunter's "Wilt Thou Have This Woman?"—"From the big new novel, *Sons*, by one of America's most popular authors: A tender story about a young man back from war, and the home-town girl he had always thought he loved." Same basic situation. Same story. Same ending. Bittersweet happy.

In 1968, *The Journal* crossed its heart and made a promise: "Each issue is consciously planned not only to entertain and inform you better than ever before, but to be *used*—to solve *your* problems, to help improve your life . . . . We know that you can't read every interesting book you hear about. Or even every important book . . . . We go a long way toward solving this problem for you with our New Books Program, by excerpting or condensing the most talked about new books in every issue of *The Journal*. You can keep up remarkably well, with a minimum investment of time."

A New Books Program it may be: a Great Books Program it isn't. Recent selections have included not only Mary Barelli Gallagher on Kennedy, but also Jacqueline Susann. Both in two parts.

Caught in a skein of desperate circumstance—the circulation war, the competition for advertisers, the problem of what to do about reaching the lucrative younger market. *The Journal* has become increasingly more unstable in its standards. With *McCall's* it shares the problem of not knowing who its staff is. Both magazines have suffered constant managerial shakeups over the past few years, and *The Journal*, having changed first its locale (from Philadelphia to New York) and then its ownership (from Curtis to Downe) has had acute internal aches and pains which are reflected in the finished product. *McCall's*, not without a mess in its own house, has managed to keep the facade better polished, if nervously over-decorated. Further, neither magazine seems any longer to know who its readers are. Jessica Mitford raised the question in *McCall's* in connection with television programming, and with the substitution of reader for viewer, and female for male, the comment is appropriate for both media: "Is the normal viewer a Midwest businessman, a Southern farmer, a New York mechanic? Or is it a girl—a Mormon housewife, a Negro teacher, a Catholic beauty operator? Is he unemployed; is she on strike? Is he in debt; is she in analysis? Is he getting on well with the boss; is she getting on badly with the children?"

The only common denominator is that the subscribers are women, and while women do normally share special interests (it nevertheless seems a bit much that when Eric Goldman was planning President Johnson's "quiet brain trust," he designated women, along with education, labor and minorities, as possible disaster areas), no cognizance is taken of the fact that more women are better educated than ever before, that women like men are political animals with a point of view, that conspicuous consumption is not everyone's game, let alone everyone's potential, and that primers and picture books can be outgrown.

Further, the New York-based editors are divorced from reality. They patronize their readers—we recommend "a new little, slightly avant-garde cookbook called *Hors d'Oeuvre* (and pronounced Or Derve)"—and they patronize their subjects. When Dean Rusk's daughter is photographed with her new husband, the headline reads, Peggy Rusk: First Pictures of Her Interracial Marriage. While women's magazines have been using Negro models particularly in kiddie layouts for some years now, there is a residual self-consciousness about the whole business, and in the spreads that appear showing groups at barbecues, church socials and local parties, all the ladies still wear the same clothes, the same hair and the same complexion—white. The American dream dies hard. Scotty Lanahan, 25 years out of Vassar, quotes a classmate: "Collectively, we are not very original, reflecting common anxieties about rising prices, poverty, intolerance, violence, mediocrity (there were lots of complaints about repairmen.)" Mrs. Lanahan then adds that they have all settled into their $75,000 houses, as if settling into one's $75,000 house were the norm. "Just as the country is affluent, we are affluent, almost incredibly so."

III

Let us turn now briefly to a women's magazine that does pass as sophisticated and literate (one in which, incidentally, a $75,000 house would be below the salt): *Vogue*.

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(For some reason, American magazines almost invariably come in pairs; *Harper's Bazaar*, which is the twin of *Vogue*, and which used to have first-class literary coverage, is now reduced pretty much to its horoscope. The work of Xavora Pové, this is wildly popular, and Miss Pové, by way of bonus, sometimes offers extra general insights: "How can we begin to measure the influences that determine human behavior? Why is it that pink shower curtains in Macy's basement will be the choice of the day when only a month later the blue ones are the public's overriding choice? It is too easy to shrug off these events as coincidence, as quirks of human nature.")

Vogue is put out by a cast of thousands and with a minimal vocabulary. In a single issue, makeup is creamy dreamy, grommets are sassy brassy, fake fur is gleamy dreamy, and silk scarfs are the yummiest plummiest. The only other adjectives in frequent usage are *delicious* and *amusing*, sometimes rendered as *witty*. The following are delicious: the small wrapped head, hair streaks, the new little dresses, the cocky look, a sable cape, and an actress, "delicious in the new movie, *Bye Bye Barbara*, ditto here in layers of goodies." The following is a giggle: the Napoleonic haircut, a-tousle with "choppy amusing ends, all different lengths;" this is "not the first time the distaff side of the family has taken male ideas onto their own heads, but possibly one of the most amusing." A certain lady is "as witty with her wigs as she is with her enchantingly-accented conversation." The other words in the *Vogue* dictionary are swoosh, scrumptious, bliss, divine, polish, shimmer, slick and ice (as in slick on your lipstick to ice your lips), luxe (old hat in some circles), vervey, adorable, yummy and panache.

No one in *Vogue* ever talks about quintuplets, let alone has them; still, small delicate intimacies are nonetheless disclosed. "In Palm Beach, Mrs. Peter Pulitzer has had her marble bathtub set before a bow window opening on a jungle garden." . . . . *Au contraire* — *Vogue* speaks French and Italian—Mrs. Murray Ward, also Bel Air, also quick-moving wanderer, stacks up to nine dresses on a hanger in her traveling case . . . . Mr. and Mrs. Wyatt Cooper dine "on the terrace Right, lighted by candles and lulled by the silvery sound of Faraway's mesmerizing stream." About Mrs. Cooper — "whose *nom de peinture* is Gloria Vanderbilt" — the magazine is coy to the point of sycophancy, and over the years it has presented a mini-history of her activities — or inactivities, since she is usually pictured at ease.

Where *McCall's* and *The Journal* accept the prevailing folk heroes—the movie star, the president—*Vogue* creates a personality as a commodity. Along with Gloria Vanderbilt, for instance, we have Amanda Burden at a good many stages—Amanda Burden child bride, Amanda Burden young matron, Amanda Burden Capote guest, about which more later. Audrey Hepburn for some reason straddles all the media, the difference being that in the pages of *Vogue* she is likely to remain younger longer than elsewhere. "We'll level with you: this Vogue is for the young ones. For the barefoot girl at right, with her clean cut shining hair and her relaxed, ready, steady glow of good health — a bewitching young colt of thirty-odd, name of Audrey Hepburn." That the bewitching young colt at the time of writing was closer to forty than to thirty, the well-preserved readers of *Vogue* fully appreciate. There is consolation in the knowledge: "Age — to paraphrase one of the all-time triumphs of agelessness—has nothing to do with it!"

Vogue used to eat, albeit boozily. A Fête Champêtre for Twelve meant that there was sauterne in the chicken broth, burgundy in the ham, and bourbon in the beans. *Vogue* also used to read and no longer really does, despite a portrait gallery of fashionable authors (Susan Sontag, Isaac Bashevis Singer) and a token bouquet of reviews in each issue by refugees from *The New Yorker* and *The New York Review of Books*. But the magazine does have a house intellectual, and that is Truman Capote.

Capote gets mentioned in People Are Talking About (people are rarely talking about whatever it is), and he once actually did a My Summer Holidays piece: snapshots of his cruise of the Greek Isles, with scribbled captions on this order—"this scribe and a charming tycoon from Washington, D.C." and "Yours truly aboard a poor donkey, Photo by Kay Graham." He also dished up some sentimental leftovers on Dick and Perry—"And so, like their victims, they perished. As for the landscape [two page picture], the stark earth upon which this tragic design was inscribed, that endures."

When Capote writes about his friends, he includes the reader in his musings. We are all one in his world—Dick and Perry and Kay Graham and you and I and Donna Marella and the Avvocato. "You should hear them when they are angry. Especially with each other. Mamma mia! Speaking of speed: Never get in a car when *he* is behind the wheel, not unless you consider it a simpler way out than sleeping pills . . . . If she (the wondrous Donna Marella!) should ever invite you to go sight-seeing, or skiing, or even for a casual stroll, look her straight in her huge, irridescent, permanently astonished eye and say 'No, Donna Marella, definitely not!' . . . . Let her go. Alone. She will survive. You won't, or scarcely." He then goes on to share their other lovable shortcomings—their "habitual tardiness, and exceedingly small regard for the sanctity of confidence," and so on.

All the dangling references are consolidated in Gloria Steinem's account of the Capote party—The Party. It was basically, Diana Trilling said, "a very nice dance for friends," and they are all there—not Dick and Perry, mind you, but Alvin Dewey, who "answered questions about problems of the Clutter case, just as dignified and direct in the Paley dining room as he had been in Kansas during the murder investigation in *In Cold Blood*." And Clifton Daniel, whose jitterbugging "increased one's respect for *The New York Times*." And Kay Graham and Lee Bouvier and Donna Marella and Amanda Burden, of whom a sidewalk spectator said, "She must be European, *Our* girls don't look that good."

But the operative photograph is the one labelled simply Miss Penelope Tree. It is of a young straight-haired

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girl, smiling and smoking, and what she is is a product in the process of being synthesized by *Vogue*. In its first major feature on her, The Penelope Tree (this, of course, follows from The Shrimp and The Twig), fourteen pages are devoted to this youngster, who says that her face is manufactured, ... and all makeup: . . . . "the detail is so amazing, an intricate and spectacular canvas on which she paints the mood of the day." Penelope's artistry extends beyond her appearance, "but the nerves and the despair arise because she has the confidence that she *can* write and is simply afraid she won't. 'I'll do anything to put off the moment when I have to sit down and face that blank piece of paper. Go for walks, do my nails, do things I don't want to do and that don't need to be done . . . . anything but start.' "

The Avedon pictures show a sparrow-breasted large-footed whimsical creature in one bizarre stance after another. Sample pose: Penelope *à l'equestrienne*, sealed neck to toe in a black jersey leotard that extends into soles. The freakishness is underlined by Avedon's answer to the query, "*Qui êtes vous*, Penelope Tree?" "Penelope is never only of today; to each gesture she brings a sense of all the things that have ever interested her." Penelope, bear in mind, is seventeen.

As the Odyssey continues, Penelope graduates from lemon dyed Norwegian fox tied with a ribbon, to an outer Mongolian coat, "chained high over sable-cuffed knickers in red, blue, and yellow Tartary stripes—the sable waistcoat, out from under there, is just tossed over the shoulders and knotted in a great brush of skins." She then visits her parents' coral mansion in the Caribbean —Penelope's Tree House—and says, "You live sensually there. It allows your soul to rest." Then she "carries the charade to the moors of Cornwall . . . . where she continues to act out every minute of her life with a lively combination of wit, spirit and a style all her own."

Eventually, she is permitted to speak. After a family portrait that indicates that she is a Peabody, there is a table headed Marietta Tree and Her Two Daughters. Their Opinions on 6 Subjects. In a large spread, laid out in three columns, are their respective thoughts on Being Your Age, Men, Viet Nam, Love, Civil Rights, and Sex. Under heading #2, Penelope's statement is, "Well, I quite like them. Some of my best friends are men."

IV

In the continuing saga of women's magazines, *Vogue* in 1970 is still with the pedigreed minnows, and *Harper's Bazaar* with Xavora Pové and her endless series on Cosmic Conditioning of Hair: " . . . Shave legs on February 4 (after 11:30 p.m.), 5 or 6 (until 10:25 p.m.) Regrowth should be slower, less stubby."

The Journal has removed a little of the visual icing and has had an "unprecedented"—so much so that the word was used twice—personal interview with President Nixon! "I feel a great rapport with Tricia. Everybody is two persons. Even though I'm supposed to be an extrovert —because I'm a 'political animal' and can get up before an audience—I'm basically reserved, Tricia is just the same."

Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon have lifted their voices in these pages and so have the Women's Lib ladies, two hundred strong, who, after a sit-in on the premises, were granted an eight page supplement, the anonymous work of the collective, in which to say that women have been victims of a conspiracy, that they must construct a new psychology, that the battle to stay beautiful pits them against one another. All this was undercut elsewhere in the same issue by the Zodiac Love Chart—agree with most of his ideas, accept his crazy schemes tranquilly, forget your bossy streak, just beguile him, don't dominate him.

At *McCall's*, Shana Alexander has been experimenting with an overhaul in format, layout, and thinking. That a literate, sophisticated, and tough-minded women's press can exist has been demonstrated in the past by the New York *Herald Tribune*, and in the present, particularly under Charlotte Curtis, by the New York *Times*. Whether this level is possible, or paradoxically even desirable in a mass magazine remains in question; the obvious roadblock is one of economic feasibility—i.e., the price in alienated paying customers and advertisers. Also, of course, 150 pages of such relentless cleverness might be tiresome. "It is," Mrs. Alexander has said, "a mysterious, frequently clumsy, often brutal, and always risky business to make changes in a beloved and venerable institution of this size," and at this point it looks as if queasy compromise and leftover cosy fatuousness make for strange bedfellows. If the fiction is still frequently dreary, it is at least no longer by Barbara Robinson; if the non-fiction is hardly distinguished stylistically—slipshod grammar being a commonplace—the pages are at least less swamped in glop and the content seems bolder. Yet there is something inescapably absurd about an article section that consists in its entirety of the following: Can We Save the Great Whales? Tom and Nancy Seaver—America's Very Own Beautiful Couple. Sex and the Married Woman. Edmund Muskie—The Agonies of a Front-Runner. The medium is still the message, and the medium contaminates.

With less emphasis on manipulation, consumerism and glamour (the famous victim, Sharon Tate or Mary Jo Kopechne, is still featured), there is a shift to the political, albeit in dilution. The White House is out and a galaxy of liberals is in. These have included Eugene McCarthy as poet and sermonizer, David Halberstam, Ralph Nader, Tom Wicker on George Wald, Arthur Miller, John V. Tunney, Richard N. Goodwin and Gloria Steinem, who managed to advise Hugh Hefner that a woman confronting *Playboy* feels at times "a little like a Jew reading a Nazi manual." Shirley Chisholm has had an editorial ("our first guest Eye . . . a visiting feminine eye") in which she has said what she has said everywhere else, that "Women have not even reached the level of tokenism that blacks are reaching;" and a subscriber has commented that *McCall's* is out of the kitchen and into the world.

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ROBERT DANA

TWO POEMS

from

THE STILLNESS AT THE CENTER OF THE TARGET

13:

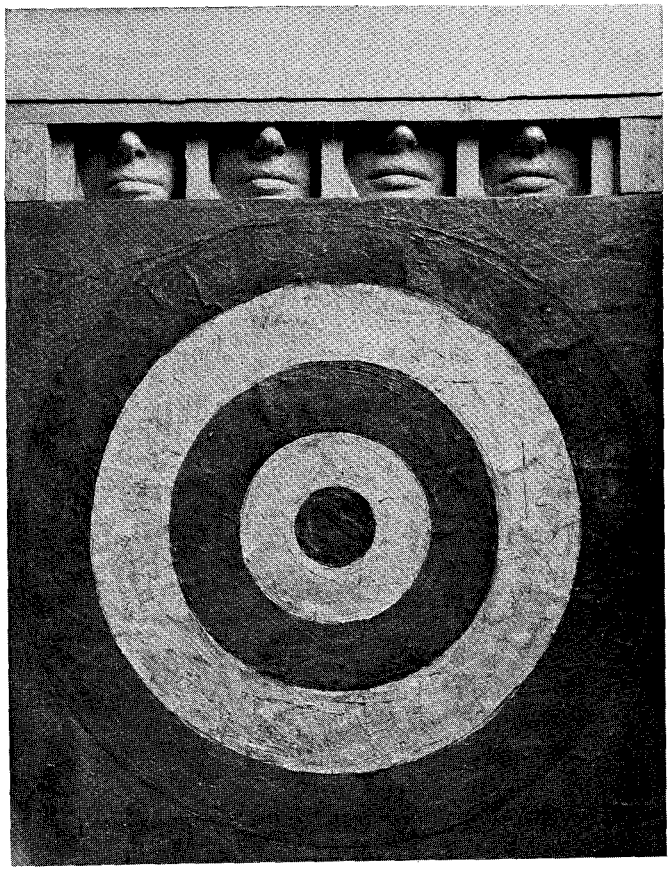
It has been evening all day
Midwinter rain sleek and raw

Nine days it has been falling on Los Angeles
Great trees gutter
Canyons with their houses slump into the sea

Now the trucks are made ready again
and the refugees take the darkness from their shoes
They hear grief hum in the heavy metal

Some are relieved to be carrying away nothing
Some bear letters of introduction some knives
None asks where
The trucks move out in the direction of the mountains

At first light
small birds cry in Syrian "Sirhan! Sirhan!"
and the wolf lies on the left side of his blood
slowing into sleep



JASPER JOHNS
"Target with Four Faces" (1955)
Collection: Museum of Modern Art
Courtesy of Leo Castelli, New York

17:

We have given the distances birthdays
We drive into the storm of my life's eye

We drive with thunder in our windows
Razors could not cut the rain from the glass

We lose the houses barging up the river
the egrets among the islands the islands

The river runs away into the narrows
We lose the day in the white rain

You remember a stone heavy as a gift
Your mouth tastes like bread

I remember a little girl saying
'Death means somebody has to kiss you'

I'm not asking you to love me
I'm asking you to like me

We have driven into the radio's excuses
into the touch at the end of our headlights

Without names the tall rocks pass us
soaked in our slow live breathing

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PAUL PETRIE

IN THE TOMB OF THE MEDICIS

1. Dawn

Thrust up—sea-weighted, night
dragging the limbs—
into air
like a halo of spears.

First coming or last ascend.

Pain heralds birth—whether trees
pushing out through the ends of their hands;
or the sky's mouth
drawn red.

The journey reaches to the end—wisdom
to be fulfilled, power
poured back
into vessels of air—

Though even now, the trumpets of judgment blow.
Awake, dark sleepers, awake!
Take the sum of things in your hands,
and at the beginning
begin!

2. Day

Suns from the bunched ribs burst—hawk stare
of light
welling—
torsions
of hills—

On the cloud-capped ridges trees
march whirling their roots
round their heads.
The ground writhes with seeds. Oceans, rivers
turn like mills. Windows
stream—

Curled like a cat in the sun
Time basks
in the heat of the day.

3. Dusk

Whatever is sun-quick, sea-limbed, wind-swift
slows—
Only shadows move.

Thought's shadow falls.
In involute coils
the loined muscles
droop.
Hills lean
on the sky.

Must the finished picture stir?

The wings of swallows and bats
weave for the river's winding
a hood;

And the sky bends
over the closing mouths
of flowers.

4. Night

Half circles meet.
No light
escapes.
Elbow on stone thigh rests.

Even the cries of owls
nest in their throats.
Leaves
merge into leaves.
The gaps of hills
close.

What eyes are those shining
through the dark mask of the woods?

Lean back, stone god, resign
all things to sleep.
Through the limbs of your body flow
the powers of dreams.

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A STORY BY DENIS JOHNSON

THE TAKING OF OUR OWN LIVES

Riggs Northup, whose life so far had progressed like that of any other town moron, sat in his battered Chevrolet until nearly midnight and staved off any inkling as to what everything in him had led to. He watched the stars. All the stars were clearly visible in the summer sky except through those portions of the windshield where two or three grasshoppers had smashed into the same spot, splattering tobacco juice. Also he watched the moon, rising very late tonight, on the horizon, so much like a great round orange it made Riggs thirsty.

For now the moon just hung there, uncertain, but in a moment it would make up its mind and the long ascent would begin. Soon after, it would pale and recede until it was distant and unapproachable like the train bearing away the corpse of some mutilated hero. Not one soul would be able to stop it, not one voice could call it back. He remembered that Abraham Lincoln, dead, was carried through the country on a train. Maybe a lot of people would be sorry, he hoped. Maybe there would be a lot of apologizing but the moon would go on and later everybody would be blaming everybody else.

In addition to the moon and stars, Riggs watched the small farm he had parked before, although the farm did nothing but continue to move with the rest of the country toward morning. He peered up the long driveway at the single glowing window of the farmhouse, then at the powerful lamp that lighted the yard, then back again at the window, wondering if they were going to stay up all night in there, or what? Periodically he rested his eyes from the glare of the two lights to change the station on the radio, or to reach in the back seat and touch the rifle, or take the pistol and hold it in his lap.

The rifle was a carbine bequeathed him by his long-deceased father. The pistol was a twenty-two he had stolen just yesterday from the sporting goods department at the Sears and Roebuck store. The grotesque space-age, ray-gun shape of the little target pistol fascinated him so that he could not leave it alone. It was so streamlined that even as it rested in his lap it seemed to be accelerating in flight. When he thought of it as a real pistol, intended for shooting just like any other pistol, he could not believe it. Looking down at it he felt the world speeding beyond him in its growing complexity of frills and gadgets, making him an old man at twenty-eight, leaving him behind in the world that he inhabited and understood. Yet he was stuck on this earth and as it left him, he left with it and saw the familiar territory diminishing around the unfamiliar figure of the man who was himself in the distance. He was like the man in the moon.

The man in the moon hunched down in the seat as the lights of a car began shining a half-mile back on

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DENIS JOHNSON, whose poetry has appeared frequently in the NAR, is attending the University of Iowa on a Book-of-the-Month Club fellowship. This is his first published fiction.

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the lonely dirt road. Confused by the vision of himself leaving himself behind, the man in the moon stayed low in the seat long after the lights had passed on into the evening. He crooned to himself, in a hoarse mutter, the television advertising jingles which had been so comforting to him in his childhood.

When he was calm again he rolled down the window and gazed for a long time at the big light in the yard before raising the pistol. "In the army," he reminded himself, "in target practice, we did it . . . *this* way," and the silence of the evening was blown away in the explosion of genuine silence that extinguished the light. Moving his arms a few inches he quickly aimed again and put two bullets through the lit window of the house. He was very much afraid then and he sped all the way to the large highway, frightening himself further with the risks he took on the loose dirt of the country road. On the highway, speed limit seventy, he pressed the accelerator pedal against the floor and thought: First you take potshots at somebody's farmhouse. Then you rob somebody with a gun and pretty soon you commit murder.

The automobile gained miles per hour on a long decline, seventy, seventy-two, seventy-five, shuddering in regular spasms. Riggs did not fear the speed now, or the suspicious whining of the left rear tire—bald enough that the threads showed through—or death. In the eight years of its existence the Chevrolet had passed like water through the hands of too many owners, collecting dents and scrapes, rust, repair bills and a number of fading clever bumper stickers, satisfying no one with its performance. Upon acquiring the automobile for ninety-five dollars, Riggs had set about learning its quirks and desires and had found nothing wrong with it that an occasional rest would not correct. Riggs allowed it to sit undisturbed for two days every four hundred miles, and the car performed for him perfectly. The tire would not blow. The car was well rested and the shuddering of its frame would not build toward an explosion of parts over the highway. It was Riggs who had not been given time to settle, even in a million miles. Even in his sleep he was thrown continually forward, and he could not help feeling sorry he was being driven like an automobile or a train.

Cresting a hill he viewed the land falling away beneath him and saw his tiny, lonesome self still withdrawing like the moon. *Come back! Come back!* he called, and he felt that everything could be forgiven in one who would be disappearing from view so quickly.

The first building which signaled to motorists passing that way that they had reached the outskirts of a town was the one in which Riggs ate and slept, a red wooden two-story structure. The first floor was occupied by a cramped country grocery specializing in the sale of overpriced soft drinks and souvenir post cards of the South. The second floor, connected to the first by a flight of wooden steps outside the building, was taken up by two rooms with a kitchen and bathroom. In exchange for running the grocery, Riggs and his mother were permitted to live there rent-free by the puffy-faced and sweating gentleman who owned the building. Mr. Harley Reese owned as well a tobacco farm, two gas stations in a neighboring county, and a fried chicken establishment, and he had served two terms as the town mayor before becoming a gentleman. It was Mr. Harley Reese, Riggs planned to murder, if it came finally to murder.

Framed by a window in the second story, Riggs' mother was rocking back and forth through the grey light from the television. Riggs killed the engine and lights beneath the window and observed her as she lifted her shoulders up level with her ears, brought a plate full of cherry pie up level with her open mouth, and, nodding strong agreement at the television screen, shoved with her fork and gulped. Without turning her head, and still clutching the fork, she banged frantically on the window screen. "Come see this man!" she shouted in the direction of the television. "This man has got the right ideer! Hurry up or he'll be gone!"

Inside it was too hot. Riggs took a beer from the refrigerator and leaned against the kitchen counter, rolling the cool can over his cheeks and mouth. He lowered his head and studied, as they spread away from his feet over the length and breadth of the warped linoleum floor, a myriad of printed identical roses in the process of blooming.

The mother said, "Would you enjoy some cherry pie? Come look at this man. This is the Reverend Mister Thadius Macomber, a true saint if ever there was one, I'm here to tell you. Come *on*. He'll be over in just about one minute."

"So what?" Riggs popped open his beer and guzzled half of it rapidly away.

"Well you just listen to him for one second and you'll *see* so what, *that's* what," the mother said. She was a slight woman with straight grey hair cut even with her ear-lobes and parted in the middle like a child's. Riggs was a full two feet taller than she, looming and round-shouldered with too much weight on him.

His mother exhaled deeply as though she did not expect to find any use for oxygen ever again. "Too late. He's gone off the air now," she said. "Now if you would of only listened, you might of learnt something. They was a man come up there," she rose and joined him in the kitchen, "pie's right where it always is, right here. They was a man come up onto the stage there I was saying, he had a big old cane and couldn't take a step hardly, without looking like he was to fall over. And the Reverend Mister Thadius Macomber prayed on him a little and up he come, good as new, and throwed away that cane and walked right on off the stage. Right there on the television set for the entire world to see."

Riggs sipped his beer more slowly now. "So what?"

"Well I'm *telling* you so what. They had a woman up there reading postal cards from California even. And every one of them cards was testifying how the people that wrote them was healed when they come to his sermons and got prayed on. This one woman had asthma

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all her life and couldn't never breathe through her nose till he prayed on her." The old woman lifted the pie-plate from the kitchen counter and began to eat the last piece remaining there. "Not one single solitary breath through her nose. But then she testified on her postal card that she has a new life thanks to the Reverend Mister Thadius Macomber. *But.* That ain't even the most important part."

Riggs examined the reflection of the overhead light on his beer can while his mother, smacking loudly, consumed her cherry pie. He did not want to have to ask her what the important part was. Once she raised her eyes to him expectantly and expelled from between her lips one glistening cherry pit, but he said nothing. For a moment it appeared Riggs might triumph but, the last of the pie gone, his mother began the lengthy process of scraping the plate with her fork. Annoyed, Riggs asked finally, "What's the most important part?"

"The important part is that he, the Reverend Mister Thadius Macomber, he has done *proved,* that the United States America is a direct gift from God on High to the people of the Earth, to save them for the coming of Christ on this planet. He done it with references from the Bible. The prophecies of the Bible don't leave no doubt in the least. In *fact,* He might be in this country right this very minute. Christ Our Lord Hisself."

Riggs was impressed by this information and he considered it for a moment. "Who do you suppose it could be, Ma? The President?"

"Pssht! The President! No—sir—not—for—a minute. You think Jesus would be paying off the niggers like the President? Jesus helps those who help themselves, and them niggers only helping themselves to everything us white folks breaks our backs for. No sir. It certainly is not the President. Now you consider just for a minute. Who do you think?"

Riggs said, "I'll have some of that cherry pie now."

"Well it's all gone. Why didn't you say sooner? I'll bake some up first thing tomorrow. Who do you think? It's plain as *day.*"

Suspicion came to shadow Riggs' features. "It ain't nobody to do with the U.S. Army?"

"Course not. Come *on.* Just consider hard for one minute. It's plain as *day.*"

"If it's anything to do with the U.S. Army I don't want to hear no more about it."

"Oh it ain't a thing to do with the army. You just go on and on about the army this and the army that, and you ain't even seen the army in eight years. It's no wonder you couldn't do right on them tests if you can't calculate who is Christ on this Earth when it's just as plain as the beer in that can who it is."

Riggs drained his beer. He turned from her and glared into the sink. The answer did not rise from the drain there. From the television room, which also served as his bedroom, The Star Spangled Banner ground into the air. "I know just exactly who it is," he said, "but I ain't telling you. If you think I'm going to tell you, you're just as crazy all right."

"Well I declare!" the mother said. "Who was it I just now told you healed all them people? Who was it they testified for on all them postal cards? It's the Reverend Mister Thadius Macomber, that's who. It's him. I'll stake anything on that."

The Star Spangled Banner ended and was replaced by a sound like that of water running from an untended faucet. Riggs said, "It ain't him. I won't never believe it's one of them television preachers. Why, them television preachers got to go on the television just because they can't get their own regular congregation, that's all. It ain't him."

His mother allowed her eyelids to droop slightly. "Whoever said that about television preachers?"

"I said it just now," Riggs said, his back toward her as he reached again into the refrigerator for a beer.

"It just so happens that the preachers on the television do it thataway, and the ones on the radio too, it just so happens they do it thataway because they have the Christian souls to consider all the poor invalids and people which have to work so they can't go to church Sunday like regular folks. That's all. And who thunk that up for you? You certainly never thunk that up for yourself all by yourself."

"I certainly did myself."

"You never," his mother said. "Because you ain't smart enough."

"Never mind," Riggs said. "I thunk it for myself. Never you mind about it." He turned from the refrigerator. "I didn't tell you yet but I'm getting smart. I didn't tell you because it was supposed to be a surprise. Now I decided I won't show you when I finally get all smart. So now you can just never mind about it."

Her eyelids drooped farther, all but closing. "You never."

"Never MIND I said!" Riggs threw the full can of beer overhand into the sink. There was a clanging noise and drops of beer were deposited on the walls and floor and mother and son so that they might have been standing in a summer shower, looking out for clouds shaped like barnyard animals or the faces of movie stars. Riggs felt he could smile as they stood there with the drops of liquid glistening on their faces, if his mother would only smile first.

The mother ignored the drops of beer. "And what you done with your Daddy's carbine?" she said. "Don't think I didn't mark *that* was gone, neither."

It seemed a hand much larger than his own covered his face now, stifling his breath and blacking out the room. Riggs blundered out the door. At the bottom of the outside steps he fell, tearing the skin on his elbow. He slammed the car door and raced for a half-mile over the highway, regaining a slight hold on the events constituting the day, before pulling onto the shoulder to sit. He punched his mother's face until the blood ran indistinguishable from the innards of cherry pie and her eyes were forced to open completely, begging.

On the radio there was a country-western music sta-

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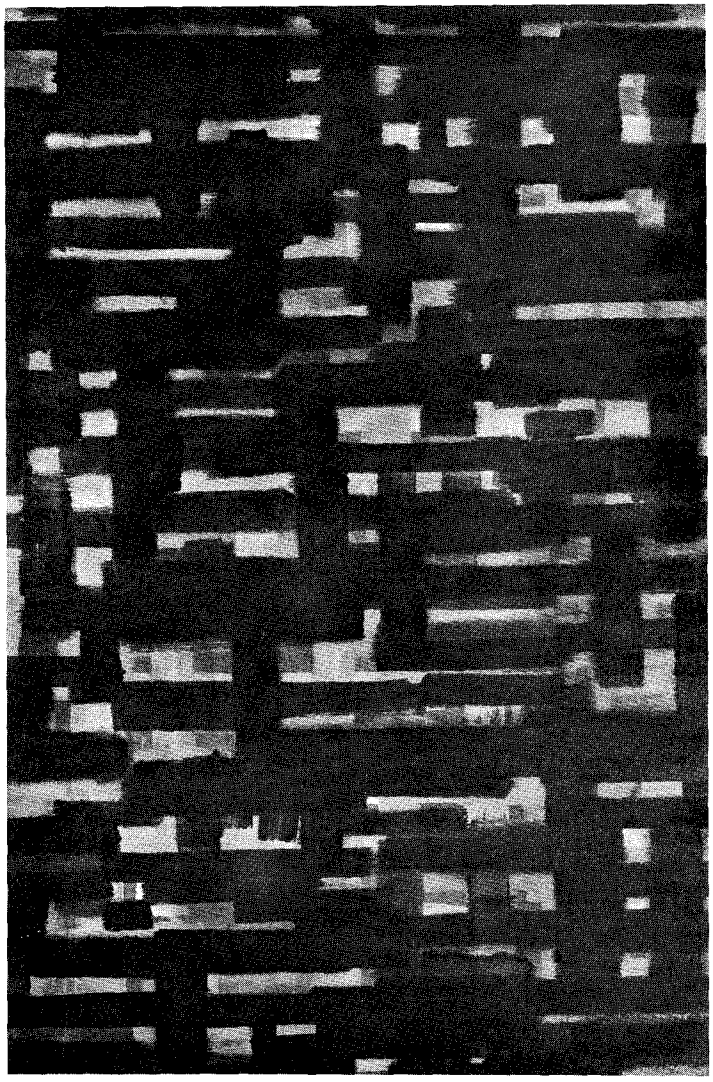
tion broadcasting over the length of four states from New Orleans. Riggs listened intently as a young woman's voice suggested ways of doing right by your semi-truck. She called the audience "You boys." At the same time she spoke of semi-trucks, Riggs realized, she was speaking of men and women, referring to the trucks in feminine terms, speaking of herself, in fact, and "you boys," the calm sexuality in her tone assuring that the world was composed of men and their women and men and their trucks, with nothing else to subtract from the clean power of these relationships, a world moving directly forward like the highway into a visible and controllable future. Riggs plowed forward, going fast if he chose or slow, or stopping altogether if he chose. In his truck he knocked aside shopping centers. Next to him was a perfumed faceless collection of breasts and legs and pubic hair, his woman.

The summer before, Riggs had circled the parking lot of a drive-in restaurant over and over in his newly purchased Chevrolet. He had stared ahead, turning the wheels and moving slowly forward and observing the shopping center across the street sweep over the windshield, and then the wide farmland back of the restaurant and again the shopping center, the children carrying balloons from the shoestore, the grasshoppers thrown above the tobacco, the pale women accusing their husbands before the window displays, the scarecrow deteriorating, a man locked out of the state liquor store at closing time, bee-swarms descending on the rotten pears —until a girl waved to him, smiling, and he stopped for her.

He had nothing to say and said nothing, but the girl, whom he had never seen, had gone through this ritual often and was full of smiling words that moved about the interior of the Chevrolet like hopeless moths. In a moment, after purchasing their soft drinks, they were heading east on the highway. Riggs could think only how, at the age of twenty-seven, he was making his first pick-up, how he did not know this girl, how he wished he were alone. Attempting to be glib and casual he told her everything there was to know about his car, and complained about the food at the drive-in, and described for her everything he had eaten that day. He talked too much, he thought. They parked in a spot the girl pointed out.

The girl nodded continually, sipping from her paper cup occasionally but for the most part letting it rest on the dashboard while she teased her hair and examined herself in a pocket mirror. Now and then she interrupted him to ask, "What would you think if I was to curl it some?" Or, "If you saw me on the street with spit-curls coming down like so, and you didn't know me, would you say I was cheap?"

Finally the sun passed below distant hills on its way to settle other matters, and the darkness seemed to preclude all but the most necessary and crucial of conversations. She was very close to him on the seat, but he could not imagine how to begin. He thought he might simply incline his head toward her face, and that this



AD REINHARDT
"Deep green and blues" (1943)
Collection: Reinhardt Estate
Courtesy of Marlborough Gallery, New York

movement might serve to nudge them forward like two snowballs on a hill. Nothing further would be required of him then and they would race uncontrollably but smoothly toward the desired end of the evening, drawn by some inevitable human gravity until they struck harder ground.

But the girl had lines prepared for the drama of just such a moment. "Who was it broke your heart?" she asked. "I can tell your heart is broken."

Riggs became afraid he would have to think with this girl, he would have to be thinking every minute with her.

"You can tell me," she said. "Come on, you can tell me."

"All right," Riggs said, and the girl settled back with her soft drink. He said, "It was the U.S. Army broken my heart."

She had laughed at that, tilting back her head and slurping violently to keep the Coca-Cola in her mouth. She had had to lean her head from the window finally

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and spit it out. "What in the *world* do you mean?" she had asked.

Unable to retract his confession or somehow save it from its stupidity, he had forced her from the car to walk on home by herself.

The army had been the place for him but they would not let him join the paratroopers and jump from miles up in the air and wear a big airborne division patch on his jacket when he was talking to the girls, because the army was composed chiefly of the kind of man who took pleasure in excluding others. He had taken the I.Q. tests as often as they would let him, but he had never scored high enough to leave the infantry. He had not known the secret. No one would tell him what it was. Enraged by his repeated failures, he had not re-enlisted at the end of his tour. He had seen no reason for continuing with the army. No one had seen fit to tell him the secret of the I.Q. tests. Since then he had become fat. The army had been the place for him, but now he was finished with the army and he had become fat.

He climbed into the back seat and curled up. In the sky the stars were managing to shine and the moon was succeeding in its attempt to rise higher, and in the woods by the highway the animals drew the next necessary breath, and the next. Riggs closed his eyes and someone said: It was George Rivers up at the gas station told you that about television preachers. He opened his eyes and denied it. *Yes it was.* No it never was. When he fell asleep he looked down and his feet had become the wheels of an express train unable to stop. He continued to build speed until he roared past everything and hurtled from the edge of the earth in a swan dive. In one outflung hand he held his father's carbine and in the other his own twenty-two caliber target pistol. There was no one to witness the spectacular grace of this event.

Nor were there any witnesses to the robbery the following day, other than the owner of the gas station, and Mr. Harley Reese who owned the building where Riggs lived, and Harold, Mr. Harley Reese's driver.

The gas station was a little block of cement which appeared to have risen miraculously out of the dust forty miles down the highway. The owner was a stoop-shouldered wiry little man, balding, who pretended very hard that he did not mind being robbed. He was alone when Riggs strolled cautiously into the station, extending his twenty-two caliber target pistol in the manner of a blind man securing the area before him with his white cane.

"Oh-oh," the little man said. "What you doing with that gun?"

"This is a robbery," Riggs told him.

The little man shook his head and made a weak attempt to raise his hands above his head. "Well," he said. "I have owned this very same gas station for just about thirty-six years. Lacks a few weeks of being thirty-six years. And you're the very first robber ever to walk through that door." He emitted a high-pitched noise originating in the back of his throat. "I was the third person in the state to put up a all-concrete gas station," the man said. "There wasn't but one pump out there then. I didn't put in the second pump till four years ago last January. Say, you wouldn't really shoot me would you?" he asked.

Riggs nodded with some embarrassment. "I guess I would if you made me do it," he said.

There were eighteen one-dollar bills, two half-dollars, and seventeen quarters in the cash register. Riggs did not care to take any of the smaller change.

"I don't guess that clears twenty-five dollars by much," the man said.

"That's okay," Riggs consoled the man. "It's the robbing that counts. I can always do some more robbing later on."

The man drew the bills and coins together into a pile on top of the counter.

"What am I going to carry this money in?" Riggs asked.

"Now why don't you just put it in your pockets?" the man said.

"That ain't right," Riggs said. "You got to have a sack. Where's a sack?"

The man gave Riggs an empty sack from the waste basket by the counter. "You should have brung your own sack," he told Riggs irritably.

At that moment a dark purple Lincoln Continental drew to a halt before the pumps outside, causing a small bell to ring twice on the wall above the counter. Riggs recognized the car as belonging to Mr. Harley Reese. In the front seat was Harold, the driver, a young black boy dressed as always in a white uniform much like those worn by orderlies in hospitals. In the back seat was Mr. Harley Reese himself, wearing a white suit and a broad white hat with a black band. He was leaning forward in the seat to oversee the driver's adjustment of the air-conditioner with a variety of quick gestures, all intended to indicate that he had, at long last, encountered the limit of his patience in dealing with his young employee. Several times he removed his white hat and promptly replaced it, puffing his cheeks in and out in a series of simulated explosions of steam as he leaned over Harold's shoulder, and twice he flung himself backward to sprawl in the seat, completely helpless before the deep, abiding stupidity of the boy Harold. When he caught sight of Riggs standing inside before the counter with the gun in his hand, he emerged gratefully from the automobile and hastened into the concrete shack.

Mr. Harley Reese perspired so freely that when he burst through the door the atmosphere of the room seemed immediately to become more humid and dense. Great patches of sweat stained his underarms and the broad seat of his pants. "Whew!" he announced to the room in general, "I want me some Co-Cola!" To Riggs he said, "What you doing with that gun, boy?" And to the man behind the counter he said, "I'm Mr. Harley Reese. What's he doing with that gun?"

"How do, Mr. Harley Reese," the man said, "My

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name is Danny Grace, and this here is the first robber ever to walk through that door in almost thirty-six years."

"You figure to rob this gas station, Riggs?" Mr. Harley Reese asked. "Whatever do you think your Momma's going to say about it?" To Danny Grace he said, "Whew! You got any Co-Cola in your gas station? *Cold* Co-Cola is what I want."

"There's some in that machine there," Danny Grace said. "It takes a dime."

Mr. Harley Reese went over to the machine and deposited his dime. "What is your Momma going to say when they take you to the jail?" he asked Riggs. "Why ain't you helping out your Momma in the store, instead of robbing this here Mr. Grace?"

Riggs said, "I sure would like some Co-Cola right now."

"It takes a dime in this machine here," Mr. Harley Reese said.

"And then I might shoot you," Riggs said. "It don't make no difference about my Momma or not."

"Say," Danny Grace said. "Did you know I was the third person in the state to put up a all-concrete gas station?"

"Is that right?" Mr. Harley Reese said. "Did you know my Daddy was the first one?"

Danny Grace smiled and shook his head. He made a sucking noise and ran his tongue over the front of his upper teeth.

Riggs did not have a dime for the machine. He took a quarter from his sack of money. "Could you make me change for a quarter?"

"All right," Danny Grace said, and rang up NO SALE on the cash register.

Riggs went to the machine and purchased a Coca-Cola. He rolled the bottle over his forehead and cheeks and felt himself calming.

Mr. Harley Reese followed him to the machine. "What your Momma's going to say is, Now why did my boy go off and do a robbery when I raised him up so proper never to do any robbing?"

"Watch out or I might shoot you," Riggs said.

Outside by the gas pumps Harold was blowing the horn for service. Danny Grace scowled out at him. "Can't he see this ain't the time for it?" he asked.

Mr. Harley Reese went over to the door and called, "You fill that tank up yourself, Harold! We got us a robbery in here and the man can't come out right now!"

Danny Grace cast him an approving look. "I been selling gas in this same location for thirty-six years, lacks a very few weeks of being thirty-six years, and I'll tell you, your friend is the first robber ever to come around here. Once I had a woman had an epilectric fit right there next to the Co-Cola machine, and one time a feller knocked his wife out cold out there by the gas pumps. But this here's my first robber." He looked around the interior of the station. "That was before I put in the second pump," he said.

"Is that right?" Mr. Harley Reese said.

Riggs said, "You got to see how far away from everything I am before you understand why I got to do it."

"This feller knocked his wife out cold I was saying," Danny Grace said. "Not one word of warning or nothing. Just wham! and she was laid out flat."

"Did you have to call the ambulance for that woman when she had the fit?" Mr. Harley Reese wanted to know.

"Nope. Her sister was there who knew everything what to do, and in a minute she was all right again."

"All right!" Riggs shouted. "I'm the one who's doing the robbing here, and you ain't even listening to a word I say!" He straightened his arm to its full length, placing the gun directly against Mr. Harley Reese's neck. "I'm going to shoot you now, Mr. Harley Reese, and you ain't even listening to a word I say!"

Mr. Harley Reese became worried. "What would your Momma say if you was to shoot me?"

Riggs said, "I'll shoot myself right after, and then Momma won't have a thing to say about it."

"Lord God!" Danny Grace said. "A murder and suicide!"

"Now you know you can't do that, boy," Mr. Harley Reese said. He was looking sideways and downward at Riggs' hand which was just below his chin, and he was very stiff as if he thought by becoming very stiff he might rise into the air and float away. "There ain't any forgiveness for suicide," he said. "You know what the preachers say about suicide, and murder too. There's no forgiveness. Don't you recall when Carol Jackson done it two years ago? She took them pills and the Reverend Jackson, her very own father, said, There is no forgiveness for the taking of our own lives, on account of we are all the children of God. And it was his own daughter. Jesus forgives for robbing, but he can't forgive for suiciding. Don't you want Jesus to forgive you?"

In that town when people died it was sad. But in her death Carol Jackson had lifted herself above sadness and had become almost wonderful. She had rejected Jesus, had chosen Hell over everything and had taken on the untouchable quality of those citizens who left town forever and became prosperous. Riggs said, "I don't like Jesus no more. I don't want nothing to do with a television preacher who can't even get his own congregation." Even now he felt himself rising above the lives of people. "I got to shoot you now," he said, and he pulled the trigger of his twenty-two caliber target pistol so that a barely noticeable hole appeared just beneath Mr. Harley Reese's chin. Mr. Harley Reese fell backward and his Coca-Cola bottle broke all over the floor.

Danny Grace's legs failed him and he also fell to the floor. "Oh please don't shoot me please," he said.

"I can't," Riggs said. "I got to shoot myself now." He placed the barrel of the gun against his temple, wavered a moment, thought of his Momma and fired. There was scarcely any blood, and he sat down heavily against the wall next to the Coca-Cola machine. For some time nothing else occurred, and then, outside by the gas pumps, Harold blew the horn twice.

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F. L. König

Five Poets from the German Democratic Republic

When we talk in this country of post-World War II German poetry, we have a tendency to consider only the poetry in the German tongue which to some degree at least approaches our own standards of value and which is akin to our own literary trends, *i.e.*, primarily West German, Austrian, or Swiss poetry. Usually the vast body of new and exciting literature which comes from the Eastern part of Germany—the German Democratic Republic—is largely ignored. Occasionally, of course, we have to bow to such poetic giants as Brecht, Becher or Bobrowski, but they belong to a generation which grew up in the Weimar Republic, and not in the German Democratic Republic. The three big B's have their roots in the same literary traditions as Eich, Krolow, Benn—to mention a few names at random—and although they often are called the founding fathers of East German poetry, they hardly can be counted among its contemporary exponents.

Such poets of the younger generation as have lived most of their lives in that part of Germany which lies behind the "iron curtain" are almost unknown in this country. Who has heard names like Kirsch, Mickel, Gosse, Lorenc, Bartsch, Jentzsch?—names all taken from an East German anthology: *Lyrik der DDR*, by U. Berger and G. Deicke (Aufbau-Verlag Berlin und Weimar, 1970) which is the most recent anthology in its field and not yet available in the bookstores. All born in the late '30s, with the war as a first and lasting experience, they suddenly found themselves in a new-born socialist state and, while trying to shape it, they were necessarily shaped by this state.

East German literature, and especially the genre of lyrical poetry, has in the past been almost as much neglected in West Germany as in the United States. Only recently, in the last five years or so, has the West German public grown interested in literary voices from the East. One of the first windows from East to West was opened in the early sixties with the appearance in the West of works by Wolf Biermann.

Biermann, actually born in Hamburg, had emigrated to the East in 1953. His sharp satirical analyses in song form of the political situation in the East (and in the West too) appealed to Western audiences and were received enthusiastically. An outstanding sample of his songs is the "Ballad on the Poet François Villon." The following is a literal translation of four selected stanzas:

My big brother Franz Villon
Shares my room
When people come to search it
Villon always hides
Then he dives into my closet
With a bottle of wine
And waits until the air is clean
But the air is never completely clean . . . .

. . . .

My big brother Franz Villon
Was often caught by
Church and police
They wanted to hang him
And he tells stories, he laughs and cries
Old Margot then
Makes the old man curse
Every time . . . .

. . . .

Then he sang impolitely and beautifully
Like birds roaming the forest
While making love and stealing
Now he sits here and stammers
The vodka from Adlershof
Presses on his brain.
Painfully he reads then the *ND*[1]
(The German language there confuses him) . . . .

. . . .

If sometimes in the evening Mary comes to see me
Then Villon goes for a walk
On the wall[2] and scares the sentries
The bullets go through him
Yet from the holes they make
In Villon's case no blood flows from them
But only red wine . . . .

This literal translation of fragments of the ballad does not do justice to it, of course, but it shows some of Biermann's basic tone, that of a modern German François Villon. Others follow suit on the Western scene: besides Biermann's *Drahtharfe*, a collection of poems by Heinz Kahlau, *Mikroskop und Leier*, appeared and a collection of poetry and prose by Stephan Hermlin; in the late sixties we have among others Karl Mickel's *Vita nova mea*; Helga Novak's *Colloquium mit vier Häuten* and last but not least Günter Kunert's collection, *Warnung vor Spiegeln*. Perhaps the biggest contribution

[1] NEUES DEUTSCHLAND, *the biggest East German national newspaper, state controlled.*
[2] *Reference to the wall between East and West Berlin.*

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towards the popularization of East German literature in the West was made in 1967 when a very broad anthology of East German works was published by Hildegard Brenner under the title *Nachrichten aus Deutschland*. Although this anthology probably tries to do too much in its 400 pages, it can be recommended as a first-reader in modern East German literature and contains samples of the main genres. For the interested reader who does not have any knowledge of German, the situation of course is much bleaker. Only very sporadically can he read a few translations in literary magazines (though the translation series *Micromegas*, published in Iowa City, currently has an East German issue under preparation).

* * *

The selection of the five poets presented here is somewhat conservative, inasmuch as the representatives chosen are all well-established poets recognized both in East and West. All were born between the years 1929 and 1935, and thus they do not really belong to the youngest generation of East German poets. With the probable exception of Sarah Kirsch, they have had some of their works already published in the West. Some biographic and bibliographic data:

Günter Kunert, born 1929 in Berlin, could not finish high school during the Hitler regime for racial reasons. In 1945 he started to study art in Berlin, and in 1951 got acquainted with Brecht. Today he still lives in Berlin. His first poems were published in 1950 under the title *Wegschilder und Mauerinschriften*. Other collections of poetry and prose followed: *Der ungebetene Gast* (1965), *Das kreuzbrave Liederbuch* (1961), *auswahl 66, Unschuld der Natur* (1966), *Betonformen. Ortsangaben* (1969). Kunert is also famous as a narrator: *Die Beerdigung findet in aller Stille statt* (1968), *Kramen in Fächern* (1969). In 1967 he published a novel, *Im Namen der Hüte*.

Karl Mickel, born 1935 in Dresden. In the years 1953-59 he studied business and economy in Berlin. Today he lives in Berlin lecturing in the field of economic history. Currently he has out one collection of poetry: *Lobverse und Beschimpfungen* (1963), and one collection of poetry and short essays: *Vita nova mea* (1966). In addition to that, he has occasionally written sketches for the cabaret, and more poems have appeared in literary magazines.

Heinz Kahlau, born 1931 near Potsdam. Started as an unskilled factory worker, then drove a tractor for some time and was an organizer in the Free German Youth movement. In 1953 he became a disciple of Brecht. Today he too lives in Berlin. After trying different genres, he became famous with a collection of poetry published in 1965: *Mikroskop und Leier*. More recent collections of poetry: *Der Fluss der Dinge* (1967) and *Poesiealbum 21* (1969).

Sarah Kirsch, born 1933 in the Harz mountains. She first studied biology, then in 1964-65 she studied at the Institute of Literature in Leipzig. Today she works exclusively as an author and lives in Halle. In 1965 she published, together with Rainer Kirsch, a collection of poetry under the title *Gespräch mit dem Saurier*, and another collection in 1967: *Landaufenthalt*.

Reiner Kunze, born 1933 in the Erzgebirge. Studied philosophy and journalism in Leipzig (1952-55). Since 1959 he has lived as an author in Greiz. His poetry was published first in 1955: *Die Zukunft sitzt am Tisch. Vögel über dem Tau* (1959), *Lieder für Mädchen, die lieben* (1960), *Aber die Nachtigall jubelt* (1962) and *Widmungen* (1965) followed.

* * *

Perhaps what impresses one most in these poems is the fact that the dogmatism and didactic elements which often are so painfully obvious in literature coming from behind the iron curtain are almost completely absent. Most of the poems are political only in an extremely subliminal way, insofar as they treat the dialectic relationship between the individual and society. Kunert achieves surprising effects by letting dramatically opposite ideas meet (absent togetherness, double monolog-shorted out, the poem as nonpoem, and, perhaps most illustrative, the end of his poem Marx: "between wave and beach—enmity lasts: the best one possible"). Whereas seemingly superficial contradictions in his more abstract poems offer deep philosophical insight ("Poem as a Poem", "Double Monolog—Shorted Out"), he is perhaps at his best wherever his poems deal with historical figures (*e.g.*, "Orpheus II", "Nausicaa I", "Pitiful Hitler"). Here his paradoxes strike a subtle satirical melody.

Mickel, in his best poems, *e.g.*, "Odysseus on Ithaca", also approaches satire. His main concern is the power of the individual versus the power of the society.

Kahlau at first sight seems to come closest to what we with a shrug consider as socialist realism (c.f. "The Old Bricklayer"). His language is rarely given to experiment like Kunert's or especially Mickel's. But then he surprises us with a poem like "Newspapers". However, he writes his best poetry, probably, when he captures the drama in a seemingly insignificant situation as in "Autumn".

Sarah Kirsch's poetry is extremely versatile. Sometimes very close to surrealism (like "January") then again taking her themes from socialist realism ("Short Address") but somehow turning them against each other and thus creating amazing ambiguity. She excels especially in short unpunctuated prose pieces (or are they poetry)—a genre revived by her. Here is one of the best:

The Flower Chain Dandelion

The flower chain dandelion meets
me where I am Germany's railway
embankments dusty corners
fields she overgrows
attended gardens through the fences she takes the
leaves fine saws blooms every day new
the wind is hers it carries across rivers
walled borders sticks my fingers
together when I want to go against her

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an enduring companion first a happy
flower plaything wreath which lets the
head sense disappointment when the blooms
don't open in the room
later the Ettersberg full of dandelions idiotic
gaiety out of foundations of stalags it sprays
forth yellow dots warnings of gas line
Steps to the crematorium flower chains
children flowers beautiful yellow color of summer
reaches over the seventeenth parallel
headlarge jungle flowers sprout.

Nobody will be surprised not to find Reiner Kunze among the contributing authors to the earlier-mentioned new East German anthology. His clear voice of protest is too obvious, although it is by no means tendentious and is just as valid in our society as in his.

As far as the following translations are concerned, the poems are meant to speak for themselves. Rather than giving more or less literal translations, the idea here has been to re-create poems which can stand on their own as poems in English, even if taken out of context. The author hopes he has succeeded in this respect—at least in some cases.

Günter Kunert

EINLADUNG ZU TISCH

Stühle stürzen herbei,
Hocker Taburette Sessel
schwere Polstermöbel elefantisch,
dann Bänke, galoppierend oder humpelnd
auf zerbrochnen Beinen: Zu Tisch! Zu Tisch!

Dass etwas sie besetze und besitze,
eilt aus allen Ecken armes Wohnwerk,
ohne Hintern, die es wahllos nimmt
wie sie kommen: dicke dünne fette knochenspitze,
feisten Pfirsich, stramme Backen, flüsternde,
um nicht leer und sinnlos einzustauben:
Zu Tisch! Zu Tisch!

Zu nichts nutze als zu Tisch
dem Essenden, dem Fressenden, Allesschlingendem
zu dienen: dem eignen unverdaulichen
Geschick.

INVITATION TO DINNER

Chairs come rolling
stools, hassocks, rockers
heavy sofas elephant-like,
benches then, galloping or limping
on broken legs: come to the table!

That something may occupy and own them,
rush from every corner poor furniture
without backsides, which takes them
as they come: thick, thin, fat, bony
plump peach, firm cheeks, whispering
because they do not want to wait under layers of dust
empty and without meaning
Come to the table!

Coming only to life when surrounding the table
serving the eating, gulping and devouring
their own indigestible fate.

AKTFOTO

In den schwarzen Schattenspalten
verröchelt das Licht. Fruchtlosigkeit
birgt sich hinterm Kalk
blitzgeknipster Haut.
Die Technik kennt keine Scham
und betont Zoologisches: Lippen, schnappend,
lastendes Gehänge, Kugelhaftes, tiefgekerbt,
teils gebeugt und teils gestreckt.

Die Technik kennt nichts von dir
als Abbilder, die dich
nicht zeigen.

NUDE PHOTO

In the black shadowy crevices
the light gasps. Fruitlessness
hidden behind the limelight
of flash-illuminated skin.
Technology knows no innocence
and emphasizes the zoological:
lips biting, weighted hangings,
ball shapes, deeply grooved,
partly bent, partly stretched.

Technology knows nothing of you
as prints which
show you not.

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UNTERWEGS MIT M.

Im Auto gemeinsam
unterwegs auf vergessenen Strassen
geborstene Wespen am Glas
platzender Regen
Sonne und Dunkelheit
und wieder Sonne: Wechsel
weniger Worte. Abwesendes
Beieinandersein. Sorglos.
Glück.

ON THE ROAD WITH M.

In the car together
on the road, forgotten stretches
splattered wasps smearing the glass
drumming rain
light and darkness
and light again: nothing is said.
Absent togetherness. Carefree.
Happiness.

ZWIEFACHER MONOLOG — KURZGESCHLOSSEN

O über unsere Kinder, die Computer,
o ihr ohnmächtiges Mitleid für uns:
mit zerstanzter Zunge reden sie
logisch und zwecklos, weil Logik, weil Zweck,
an Väter gewendet, o nur Verschwendung bedeutet:
unrationeller Irrationalismus
elektronenschneller stillgestandner Kuben,
von oben bis unten nichts als Gehirn,
das denkt und denkt
und denkt:
O über unsere Bediener, die Sauerstoffel
und Ach
und Wehe den lymphatischen Gespenstern,
unfähig zu wahrer Logik, zu dem reinen Zweck:
O über unsere kindlichen Erzeuger: O O O O
O O O O O O O O O
OOOOOOOO
oooooo

DOUBLE MONOLOG — SHORTED OUT

O our poor children, the computers
o their impotent pity for us:
with punched tongues they speak
logically and aimlessly, since logic, since aim
directed to fathers, o only means waste
unrational irrationality
electronically sped arrested cubes
from top to bottom nothing but brain
which thinks and thinks
and thinks:
O our servants the oxygoons
cursed and damned to be our lymphatic ghosts
incapable of the true logic, of the pure purpose
O our childlike creator: O O O O
O O O O O O O O O
OOOOOOOO
oooooo

GEDICHT ZUM GEDICHT

Mehr als ein Gedicht
ist beispielsweise: Kein Gedicht,
denn das Nichtgedicht lebt
als sanfte Lauheit der Inspiration:
Umweltgefühl
des Tropfens im Wasser.
Der Leib fühlt sich geborgen.
Das Herz fühlt nichts.
Die Waage ist ausgeglichen.
Das Lot hängt still.

Gedicht ist Zustand,
den das Gedicht zerstört,
indem es
aus sich selber hervortritt.

POEM ON A POEM

More than a poem is
for instance: no poem
because the nonpoem lives as
a warm softness of inspiration:
feeling the confidence
of a water drop in its element.
The body feels safe.
The heart feels nothing.
The scales are even.
The pendulum is still.

Poem is being,
being destroyed by the poem,
by emerging
out of itself.

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MARX

Es weht wild
die Fahne dieses bedeutenden Bartes
über den immer wieder aufplatzenden Schalen
der Erde.

Es weht über wandernden Fronten.
Uber dem unaufhörlichen Widerspruch und über
dem aufhörlichen.
Uber den Kriegen, die von Donnerstagabend bis
Freitagfrüh scheinen:
Der ewige Friede zwischen Efeu und Eiche,
zwischen Unternehmern und Unternommenen,
Anordnern und Angeordneten, Machthabern und
Nichtshabern,
Gläubigen und denen, welche daran glauben sollen
müssen.

Zwischen Welle und Ufer
währt Feindschaft: die beste, die möglich ist.

BEDAUERLICHER HITLER
1
Bedauerlicher Hitler,
gejagt von Plänen ohne Mass,
zu Fuss dabei in seinem Reich von Front zu Front,
zu den Armeen,
die kaum verlassen, schon gefallen sind.

2
Autobahnen Panzerwagen Bomben gar
schafft er selber, indem er dort Zement aufschüttet,
da eine Panzerplatte walzt und hier
den Sprengstoff einwiegt, wobei
ihn höchstens eine Tasse Brühe stärkt.

3
Auch ständig ohne Schlaf, denn die Gemälde
und Gedichte, die ihn als ihn feiern,
fertigt er zu später Nachtstund
einsam selber.

4
In den Menschenschlächtereien
krepierte keiner, würfe nicht er
mit eigener Hand das Todesgas auf jene, die seiner
erbarmungslos geharrt.
Während er die Leichen, Millionen um Millionen Stück,
vor die Verbrennungsöfen schleppt, bleibt
ihm kaum Rast
von dem belegten Brötchen abzubeissen, das,
halbvertrocknet, er bei sich führt,
der Führer.

MARX

Wild unfurls the flag
of this important beard
over the busting crust of the earth:
bursting, bursting.

Unfurling over overchanging fronts.
Over limitless contradiction
and over the limited.
Over the wars flaring from
Thursday night to Friday morning:
the everlasting peace between ivy and oak,
between exploiters and exploited,
organizers and organized,
powerful and powerless,
believers and those who fall victim to their beliefs.

Between wave and beach
enmity lasts: the best one possible.

PITIFUL HITLER
1
Pitiful Hitler,
reckless plans chase him on foot
in his *reich* from front to front
to the armies
which hardly left, already have fallen.

2
Autobahns, tanks, even bombs
he brings forth, by mixing concrete here,
by rolling steel there, by weighing explosives—
only maintained by a cup of broth.

3
Sleepless forever since paintings,
poems praising Hitler as Hitler
are wrought by his lonely self
late in the night.

4.
In the human slaughterhouses
no one perishes, if he
not with his own hands
tossed the deadly gas at those, who
waited for him without pity.

5
While lugging the corpses,
millions and millions
to the open-mouthed ovens,
he hardly had time

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5
O trübes Schicksal des gewalttätig Gewaltigen,
dass er alles, was er tat, allein getan, schlachten
seinen Leichnam aus
Wurm und Plutarch junior, Platz zu schaffen
für und für
immer wieder neue alte selbe gleiche
Kopien ohne Original.

ORPHEUS II

Unverhofft beschworene Erscheinung
tritt aus dem ruhlosen Tartarus
meines Hirns,
so tritt aus Fels die Substanz:
Eurydike,
hervorgelockt von tränenseligen Schlagern,
dem Anhauch nächtiger Städte vielleicht,
vielleicht vom löblichen Schnaps
schmerzlich und schmählich und wirst
genauer besehn und bei Licht
zunichte:

Abwesend gelebt in mir lange Zeit,
bevor deiner gedacht ward,
gebrechlicher Schatten,
verdampfst du jetzt auf dem Gestein
menschlichen Erinnerns.

NAUSIKAA I

Fand mich. Schickte fort
die Freundinnen.
Unter Sonnengeisseln, unter dem Gebüsch
am Strande,
unter Stöhnen, Stammeln wirrer Worte,
löste sich die ganze Insel
der Phaiaken
auf in Lust, in Leiblichkeit,
bis am Ende nach dem Ende
nur ihr Körperabdruck blieb im Sand
zurück: grösste Kostbarkeit,
die ich je zurückgelassen, und ihr wisst:
selten nur liess was zurück
Odysseus,
ausser seinem Samen, voller Zweifel
an irgendeine Wiederkehr
irgendeines Augenblickes.

to savor his sandwich
—stale in his pocket—
the Saviour.

6
Oh dim destiny of the
power-abusing powerful
that all he did, he did alone;
worm and Plutarch junior
strip his corpse
to make room
for and for always again new old same like
—copies without the original.

ORPHEUS II

Phantom
conjured unexpectedly,
you emerge from the restless Tartarus
of my mind,
thus the substance emerges from the rock:
Eurydice
beguiled by tearful torch-songs
perhaps by the breath of cities at night,
perhaps by the commendable *schnaps*
painful and shameful you,
examined by light
you lapse.

Fragile shadow
you absently lived within me
long before you were remembered,
now you dissolve on the rocks
of human memory.

NAUSICAA I

Found me. Sent away
her fair companions.
Under the scorching sun, in the bushes
on the beach
under sighing and the stammering of wild words
the whole island of the Phaiaks
dissolved in passion, in sensuousness
until in the end after the end
only her body left its imprint
in the sand: the greatest treasure
which I ever left behind and you know,
only rarely Odysseus
left something behind
except his seed, doubtful
about any return
of any moment.

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Karl Mickel

ODYSSEUS IN ITHAKA

Wo bin ich? das ist nicht Ithaka. Die Berge
Sind blau in Ithaka, die Ebnen geräumig
Das Blattwerk grün, o Wechselspiel der Schatten
Auf Wechsellicht lebendiger Gewässer!
Stumpf schleichts zwischen Geröll stinkend
Hier. Die Haine Staub und Strünke, aufstehn
Will ich nicht, ich wäre mit einem Schritt
Am Rand der Welt und spucke auf die Hügel.

Ich hab geschrumpft dies Land, indem ich ging
Zehn Jahre Troia, und ich kenns nicht wieder
Und hätt es nicht erkannt nach einem Tag:
Was ich verlasse, schrumpft. Die Frau am Morgen
Sobald die Tür ich zuschlag, ihre eigne
Grossmutter ist sie, die Tür fällt rieselnd
In Staub, das Haus in Trümmern, Bäume dorrn
Sobald ich tret aus ihrem Schatten, Flüsse
Lassen zurück im leeren Bett geplatzte
Fische, wenn ich ausm Bad steig. So
Das hier ist Ithaka, seine eigne Mumie.

Ich bin ein Gott vermutlich und kann aufleben
Was ich einschrumpfte, andres dafür tötend.
's geht ein Gerücht, Odysseus kehre wieder
Leichenfarb, die Leichenfarb zu tauschen

Gegen Wangenrot von dreihundert Jünglingen:
Dann trügen diese Acker doppelt, Zwillinge
Wirft alles Vieh, mit Wölfen Lämmer spielen
Und Götter kehren ein in Ithaka
Regelmässig

Dreihundert Stück! Penelope, entweder
Mit jedem macht sie's, keinen will sie dauernd
Dreihundert Mann ersetz nicht einmal ich!
Oder mit Keinem? da wär sie zu langweilig
Und Kirke fällt mir ein, wenn ich sie vögle
Die Sau. Für Kirkes Schatten soll ich
Dreihundert abtun? Keinen. Troia reicht.
Ich will kein Gott sein, hinter mir zerfällt
Die sich selber fallen lässt, die Welt.

Zehn Jahr auf dünner Planke ritt ich, mit
Göttern meinen Willen kreuzend, litt
Klaglos, meines Feinds Poseidon Kraft
Stülpt ich auf meine Schwachheit, harter Haft

ODYSSEUS ON ITHACA

Where am I? this is not Ithaca! The mountains
are blue in Ithaca, spacious the plains
the leafage green, o shifting shadows
in the shifting light on living waters.
Stagnating it creeps among rocks, stinking.
Now, the grove, sticks and stumps: I will
not rise, with one step I would reach
the brink of the world and spit on the hillocks.

I have shrunken this land, by leaving—
ten years of Troy, and I do not recognize it
and would not after a day:
What I leave shrinks. The woman in the morning,
when I slam the door, she's her own
grandmother, the door bangs, crumbling into dust,
the house in ruins, trees wither
as I leave their shadow behind; rivers
leave their empty beds, bursted fish,
when I abandon their pools. So, this is
Ithaca, its own mummy.

I am a god
probably.
I can breathe life into mummies
by killing things in turn.
A rumor spreads: Odysseus returns
pale as a corpse, fading the living
restoring the faded,

the red cheeks of three hundred youths;
then the fields would yield two crops,
cattle would bear twins, lambs
play with wolves.
Compatibly visit the gods.

Three hundred! Penelope,
she either does it with all, wanting no one to last;
three hundred men, not even I can match them.
Or with none? she would be boring then
and Circe comes to my mind when I would screw her—
the bitch. Should I take care of three hundred
for Circe's shadow? No. Troy is enough.
I do not want to be a god, behind me falls to pieces
the one who lets herself fall, the world.

Ten years I rode on a thin plank,
crossing my will with the will of the gods,
suffering in silence, I hid my frailty
under the power of my enemy Poseidon,

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Vertrauend, dass die dauere und ich
Auf solchen Fels, ein Gott, mir gründe: mich.
Nun will ich nicht allein sein. Und ich geh
Mit wenig Freunden, auf der öden See
Wo keiner war, errichten ein Gefährt:
Ein schwankend flüchtig sicheres, die Erd.

Die Welt ein Schiff! voraus ein Meer des Lichts
Uns hebt der Bug, so blicken wir ins Nichts

trusting harsh imprisonment that it would last;
and I founded a god on this rock: myself.
Now I don't want to be alone. And I go
with few friends to the desolate sea
to build a swaying, passing yet safe
craft: the earth.

The world a ship! ahead a sea of light
lifts our bow, we gaze into—
the void.

ANSPRACHE DES ARBEITERS D AN EINEN NEUEN ALTEN KOLLEGEN

1
Als dein Platz leer geworden war neben mir
Und ich wie immer an deine Tür klopfte morgens
Wusste ich anfangs nicht
Dass ich dich weckte, damit du
Schlafen gingest für uns und aufwachtest für die.
Ich schlachte dir kein Kalb.
Hier ist dein Platz.
Wo die Putzlappen liegen
Weisst du.

2
Mit Missmut machten wir deine
Nicht erledigte Arbeit.
Die Frauen fanden uns täglich
Etwas schweigsamer vor.
Mühevoll schlepptest du Teppiche in deine Wohnung.
Ich schlachte dir kein Kalb.
Hier ist dein Platz.
Wo die Putzlappen liegen
Weisst du.

3
Wir hörten
Du machtest Maschinen, auf denen
Man Teile macht für Maschinen, mit denen
Man Kriegsgerät macht gegen uns.
Daran nahmen wir Anstoss.
Ich schlachte dir kein Kalb.
Hier ist dein Platz.
Wo die Putzlappen liegen
Weisst du.

4
Vor einigen Tagen fiel uns die Arbeit
Einiger andrer Kollegen
Zeitweilig zu.
Wir atmeten auf: sie
Standen an der Grenze.
Ich schlachte dir kein Kalb.
Hier ist dein Platz.
Wo die Putzlappen liegen
Weisst du.

ADDRESS OF WORKMAN D. TO AN OLD NEW COLLEAGUE

1
When your place next to me was empty
and I as usual knocked at your door
first I knew not that
I always woke you up:
you slept for us, waking for them.
I sacrifice no calf for you.
Here is your place
where the cleaning rags lie—
right?

2
Grumbling we did work,
left undone by you.
Our wives found us
more tight-lipped every day.
I sacrifice no calf for you.
Here is your place
where the cleaning rags lie—
right?

3
We heard,
you supposedly make machines,
which can produce weapons against us—
We were offended.
I sacrifice no calf for you.
Here is your place
where the cleaning rags lie—
right?

4
A few days ago
we had to temporarily do
the work of other colleagues;
we sighed with relief: they
stood on the frontier.
I sacrifice no calf for you.
Here is your place
where the cleaning rags lie—
right?

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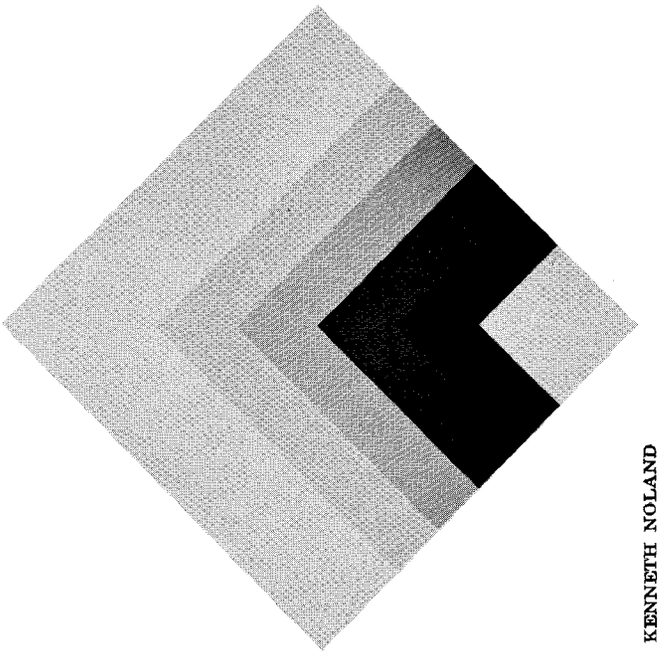
Heinz Kahlau



KENNETH NOLAND
"Saturday Night" (1965)
Collection: Andre Emmerich, New York

WUNSCH

Wenn der Mensch eine Mutter hätte
die ihn aufnimmt am Ende
wie eine Mutter ihn hergab
am Anfang —
wie leicht wär der Tod.

WISH

If man only had a mother
who would take him back in the end—
as a mother brought him forth
in the beginning—
how easy death would be.

DER ALTE MAURER

Johannes, der alte Maurer, ist tot.
Wie der Mörtel,
mit dem er Stein zu Steinen fügte,
ist sein Gesicht.
Seine Hände auch.

Der Junge,
den er gestern noch schelten musste,
wegen Achtlosigkeit,
bekam seine Kelle.

Vom Schornstein,
der sein letzter wurde,
stieg heute morgen
der erste Rauch.

Begrabt ihn ohne Lügen.

THE OLD BRICKLAYER

Jonathan, the old bricklayer is dead.
Like the mortar with which he
joined stone to stones
in his face.
His hands too.

The boy
whom he had to scold just yesterday
because of negligence
received his trowel.

From the chimney
which would be his last,
rose this morning
the first smoke.

Bury him without lies.

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HERBST

Zwischen zwei Scheiben
surrt eine Wespe.
Herbstwind beschlägt schon die Fenster.

Immer von neuem
stürmt die Gefangne,
immer von neuem.

Denn es verlängert
die Wärme des Zimmers ihr Leben
und mehrt ihre Kräfte.

AUTUMN

Between two sills
a wasp buzzes.
Fall wind steams the glass.

Again and again
the prisoner strikes
again and again,

since the warmth of the room
prolongs its life
and adds to its power.

SCHEINBAR

Hinter den Bergkämmen steht der Mond.
Aber er steht nicht hinter den Bergkämmen.
Das ist scheinbar.

Die Männer an den Steinkarren
träumen vom Glück ihres Aufsehers.
Scheinbar.

Doch häufig wird in den Brüchen
gegen Morgen vom Förster
die Asche nächtlicher Feuer gefunden.

Sagt den Bossen trotzdem,
dass der Mond hinter den Bergkämmen steht.
Es ist besser für sie.
Scheinbar.

SEEMINGLY

The moon hangs behind the mountain crests.
But it does not hang behind the mountain crests.
It only seems so.

The men pushing the stone carts
dream of their overseer's good fortune.
Seemingly.

Yet in the quarries toward morning,
the forest ranger frequently finds
the ashes of nightly fires.

But all the same: tell the bosses
that the moon hangs behind the mountain crests.
It's better for them.
Seemingly.

ZEITUNGEN

Am Morgen stand in der Zeitung:
Ein Mann wurde verurteilt.
Für wen und gegen wen?
Wer sprach das Urteil?
Für wen und gegen wen?
In der Zeitung stand nur:
Der Mann wurde verurteilt.
Wem gehörte die Zeitung —
und wem der Mann?

NEWSPAPERS

In the morning it said in the paper:
A man was sentenced.
For whom and against whom?
Who passed the sentence?
For whom and against whom?
In the paper it only said:
The man was sentenced.
Whom did the paper belong to
and to whom the man?

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Sarah Kirsch

KLEINE ADRESSE

Aufstehn möcht ich, fortgehn und sehn,
ach, wär ich Vogel, Fluss oder Eisenbahn,
besichtigen möcht ich den Umbruch der Welt.
Wo ist die Praxis hinter der Grenze? Wo
Steppenkombinate? Slums? Streiks?
Weizen im Meer? Segen und Fluch der
Zivilisation? Warum nicht New York?
Durch alle Strassen muss ich in Stöckelschuhn,
dreieckige Birnen suchen im U-Bahn-Schacht,
gehn, alles sehn, was ich
früh aus spreutrockenen Zeitungen klaube.
Dann, wenn ich müde und traurig bin
— vielleicht stimmts, Aluminiumfassaden, am Cityrand
Dreck —
fahr ich im Lift in die x-te Etage, rede
mit der Klimaanlage, nehm einen Drink, notiere
das klassenbewusste Broadway-Gedicht.
Pack meinen Koffer, werfe ein blutendes
Plasteherz ein, und weiter gehts, gradaus
nach Sibirien, wo Bäume geerntet werden.
Hah, wie schrein die elektrischen Sägen, wie steigt
Sägemehl pyramidenhoch, wie wuchert der Wald, wie
brechen die Städte herein! Und die Flüsse!
Im Boot will ich sein, über Fische treiben, die
werden gefangen wie immer, doch die ergrauten
Söhne der Fischer baun Wasserkanonen, zersägen
mittlere Berge damit, setzen Staudämme ein
und verteilen das Wasser gerecht. Mit ihnen
rede ich nächtelang, Gebratenes kauend und Wodka.
Ach, warum bin ich Dichter, ackre den Wagen
der Schreibmaschine übers kleine Papierfeld, fahr Taxi
und koche mit Wasser?
Wär ich Ardenne, Gewichtheber, Fluss oder Eisenbahn —
fortgehen möcht ich, sehn und
wiederkommen.

SHORT ADDRESS

I want to get up, leave and look,
if only I were a bird, river or railway,
I want to view the reshaping of the world.
Where is the clinic? Behind the border? Where
the steppe combines? Slums? Strikes?
Wheat in the ocean? Blessings and curses
of civilization? Why not New York?
Through all the streets I must go in pumps,
look for three-cornered globes in the subway shafts,
walk, see everything, that I pick
early in the morning from bone dry newspapers.
Then, when I am tired and sad
—maybe it figures, aluminum fronts, dirt at the city's
edge—
I take the elevator to the xth floor, talk
with the airconditioning, take a drink, note
the class-conscious Broadway poem.
Pack my bag, toss in a bleeding
plastic heart, and it's off, straight
to Siberia, the power saws screaming
sawdust climbing pyramid high, woods flourishing,
cities intruding! And the rivers!
I want to be in the boat, drifting over fish,
they are caught as always, but the graying sons
of the fisherman build water cannons,
cut through medium-sized mountains with them,
they construct dams and divide the water equally.
I talk with them for nights, chewing meat and vodka.
Why am I a poet, laboring the
typewriter carriage across the small paperfield,
driving taxi and cooking with water?
Were I Ardenne, weightlifter, river or railway—
I want to leave, look and come again.

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JANUAR

Ich bringe dir einen feuchten Fisch
einen schöngebauchten Flaschenfisch komm
wir tauschen Liebes zu dritt betreiben
ein gründliches Trinken

Eis schmilzt vom Fenster oder schmilzt nicht
die Dattelkerne
durchsprossen mit Blatt und Schaft das Papier
aus der Asche vom Teller
stülpen sich lila Blüten: jetzt

gehn wir ins Bild besteigen das Schiff

liegen auf harten grossmaschigen Netzen
fahren dem Mond den Nabel
dem Himmel ins Kreuz lachen
ob der verdatterten Dichter in Deutschland

liegen auf Ausschau im Bauch des Fischs

JANUARY

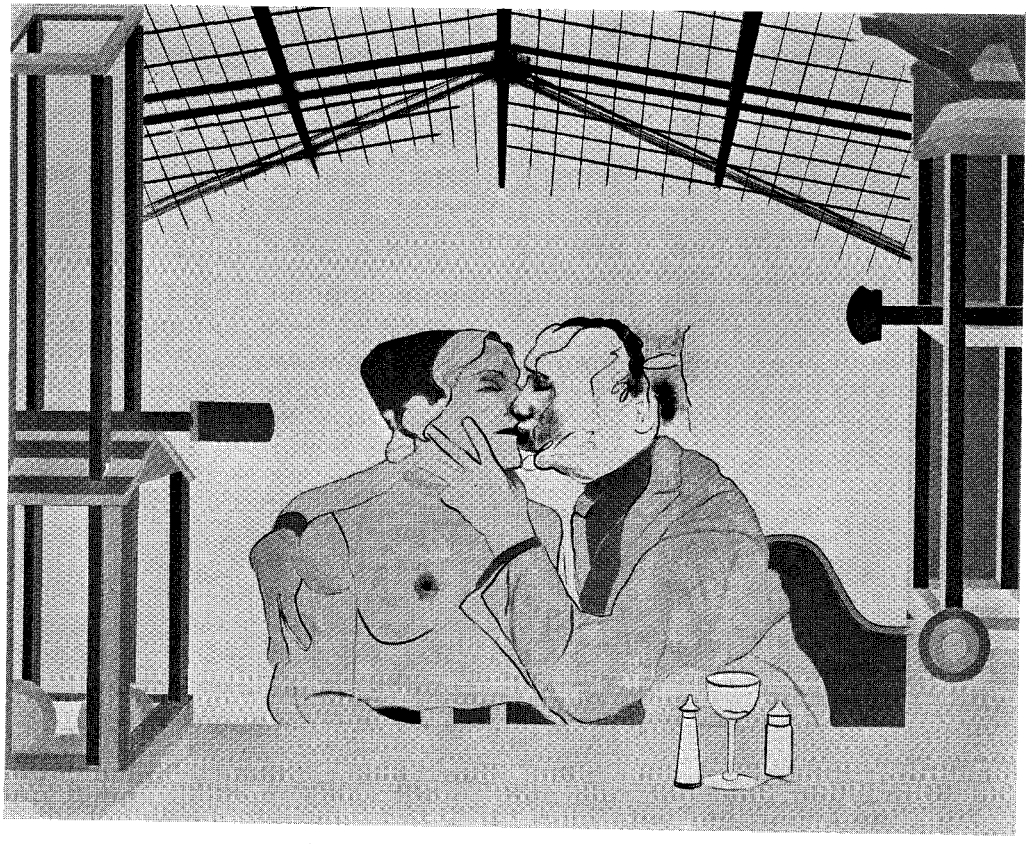
I bring you a wet fish
a glossy-bellied bottlefish come
we three trade loves, pursue
a heavy drinking.

Ice melts from the window or doesn't melt
the datepits
pierce the paper with leaf and shaft
from the ash of the plate
dip lilac blooms: now

we go into the picture board the ship

lie on hard widemeshed nets
thrust the navel into the moon
strike the sky in the back laugh
about the stupefied poets in Germany

lie on watch in the belly of the fish



R. B. KITAJ
"Where the railroad leaves the sea" (1964)
Courtesy of Marlborough Gallery, New York

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Reiner Kunze

DIE BRINGER BEETHOVENS

Sie zogen aus, Beethoven zu bringen
jedermann.
Und da sie auch eine schallplatte hatten,
spielten sie zur rascheren einsicht
die sinfonie nr. 5, c-moll, opus 67.

Der mensch M. aber sagte,
es sei ihm zu laut, das
mache sein alter.

Uber nacht setzten die bringer Beethovens
maste an strassen und plätze,
spannten drähte, befestigten
lautsprecher, und mit dem morgen
ertönte zur bessren gewöhnung
die sinfonie nr. 5, c-moll, opus 67,
laut genug auch, dass sie gehört ward
auf den feldern der stille.

Der mensch M. aber sagte, ihm schmerze der kopf,
ging heim gegen mittag, schloss
türen und fenster und lobte
die dicke der mauern.

Herausgefordert, knüpften die bringer Beethovens
draht an die mauern und hingen
lautsprecher über die fenster, dass
durch die scheiben drang
die sinfonie nr. 5, c-moll, opus 67.

Der mensch M. aber ging aus dem haus und zeigte an
die bringer Beethovens;
jeder doch fragte ihn, was er habe
gegen Beethoven!

Angegriffen, klopften die bringer Beethovens
am tore des menschen M., stellten, als er es auftat,
hinter die schwelle den fuss; die sauberkeit lobend,
traten sie ein.
Zufällig kam auch die rede
auf Beethoven,
und zur belebung des themas hatten sie
zufällig bei sich
die sinfonie nr. 5, c-moll, opus 67.

THE BRINGERS OF BEETHOVEN

They set out to bring Beethoven
to everyman.
And since they also had a record
they played for easier insight
the symphony no. 5, c-minor, opus 67.

But human M. said,
it was too loud for him
due to his age.

Overnight the bringers of Beethoven
raised poles on streets and squares,
strung wires, fastened
loudspeakers, and with the morning
the symphony no. 5, c-minor, opus 67
resounded loud enough too, so that it was heard
on the fields of quietness.

But human M. said, his head ached,
went at mid-day, closed
doors and windows and praised
the thickness of the walls.

Challenged, the bringers of Beethoven
fastened wire on the walls and hung
loudspeakers over the windows, so that
through the panes rang
the symphony no. 5, c-minor, opus 67.

But human M. came out of the house and
accused the bringers of Beethoven
and everybody asked him what he had
against Beethoven.

Attacked, the bringers of Beethoven
knocked at the door of human M. and
as it opened put their foot in
praising the cleanliness,
they entered.

By chance the talk turned to Beethoven
and to stimulate the topic
they coincidentally had with them
the symphony no. 5, c-minor, opus 67.

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Der mensch M. aber schlug mit der eisernen schöpfkelle
ein auf die bringer Beethovens.
Er wurde verhaftet zur zeit.

Mörderisch nannten die tat des M.
anwalt und richter der bringer Beethovens.
Doch hoffnung sei immer.
Er wurde verurteilt
zur sinfonie nr. 5, c-moll, opus 67,
von Ludwig van Beethoven.

Da trommelte M. und schrie,
bis die lautsprecher schwiegen
hinter den feldern der stille.

Er war schon zu alt, sagten die bringer Beethovens.
Am sarge des M. aber, sagten sie,
stehn seine kinder,
und verfügten, dass gespielt werde
die sinfonie nr. 5, c-moll, opus 67.

But human M. beat the bringers of Beethoven
with an iron ladle.
He was then arrested.

M's deed was called murderous
by attorney and judge of the bringers of Beethoven.
But there would always be hope.
He was sentenced to
the symphony no. 5, c-minor, opus 67,
by Ludwig van Beethoven.

M. pounded and screamed
until the loudspeakers died
behind the fields of quietness.

He was already too old, said the bringers of Beethoven.
But at M's coffin, they said,
stood the children,
and requested that there should be played
the symphony no. 5, c-minor, opus 67.

FERMATE NACH BOHMEN

Dem dichter Vit Obrtel

Wenn mittags die blumen stillstehn zu wiesen,
die sich bei den rainen fassen
von heimat zu heimat,
und den himmel um ein weilchen stille bitten,
hofft das himmelblau die grenztürme klein,
ganz auf ihr menschliches mass.

Das ist unsere stunde.

Da atmet die erde auf
und sagt uns beiden
für unser gedicht
den gleichen anfang.

FERMATA TO BOHEMIA

For the poet Vit Obrtel

When at noon the flowers stand still to meadows
which take each other by the edges,
from homeland to homeland
and ask the skies for a little quiet,
then the blue of the sky hopes the watchtowers small,
reduced to their human dimensions.

That is our moment.

Then the earth draws a deep breath
and tells us both
the same beginning
for our poem.

DAS ENDE DER KUNST

Du darfst nicht, sagte die eule zum auerhahn,
du darfst nicht die sonne besingen.
Die sonne ist nicht wichtig.

Der auerhahn nahm
die sonne aus seinem gedicht.

Du bist ein künstler,
sagte die eule zum auerhahn.

Und es war schön finster.

THE END OF ART

You may not, said the owl to the woodcock,
you may not sing of the sun.
The sun is not important.

The woodcock took
the sun out of his poem.

You are an artist
said the owl to the woodcock.

And it was rather dark.

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The article which follows is a chapter from Metamorphosis, *a survey of the arts to be published by Harry N. Abrams. Mr. Kostelanetz is a free-lance editor in New York.*

Richard Kostelanetz

The State of the Art of Painting

The significant geographical development in post-World War II visual arts has been the shift in the world's mystical center of artistic energy from Paris to New York; for if many of the first-rank artists of the generation born before the century's turn lived largely in Paris, after 1945 it has been artists residing in New York, only some of them American-born, who made most of the innovations commanding the world's artistic attention. Moreover, whereas young Americans of the preceding generation mortgaged their post-graduate years to spend time in Paris, now the more ambitious Europeans took their "tour" of New York and America, sometimes extending their residence in the States, other times quickly importing the latest New York styles back to their native lands. So pervasive had New York's impact become that American critics attending the major international shows remarked that the paintings there mostly resembled works fashionable in New York a few years before; and a related joke held that half of major "Japanese" art today is produced between Canal and Fourteenth Streets. Within the American scene, New York remains dominant. Just as the major dealers in contemporary art have their galleries there, so do the most influential critics live around the city, while the major art periodicals have their offices in midtown Manhattan (and the popular new magazine, *Artforum*, in its success emigrated from California to New York). By now, more of the world's important artists live in and around New York than anywhere else; some of the more successful, however, "escape" to retreats elsewhere, while those residing far away manage to pass through New York with significant frequency.

Perhaps because the modern conventions of aesthetic syntax are comparatively liberal, if not fundamentally permissive, painting and sculpture, more than other media, encourage aesthetic leaps that initiate the creation of indubitably new styles; and the history of significant postwar painting and sculpture is, more clearly than in other art, all but entirely a record of decidedly vanguard activity. The first generation of major postwar American painters, born mostly between 1900 and 1920, appropriated ideas popular in Europe before the war, many of them imported bodily by refugees from Nazism; so that the two towering figures of the first postwar decade, Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, achieved radical extensions of the two major continental innovations of the early twentieth century —Expressionism and Cubism.

In the middle forties, Pollock began to experiment with methods that Europeans called "Automatism." He would address himself to a canvas laid on the floor and then in a series of rapid movements literally pour and splatter paint all over the surface—implicitly offering for the future a precedent for radically different notions of the painter's relationship to his material. Though he eventually rejected most of the pieces created by these impulsive and yet purposeful actions, certain paintings realized an overwhelming intensity of visual activity, not only in isolated segments but *all over* a nonhierarchical, nonfocused canvas (mounted without the traditional visible frame), thereby creating a sense of nonclimaxed open form—that the design could have literally extended itself forever. Moreover, even though the result was nonfigurative or abstract, the works produced in this way were, so to speak, a kind of expressionistic self-portraiture—an objectified record of his psychological state and processes during the moments he created it, which is to say a kind of dreamy, surreal art without the refined techniques of the classic Surrealists.

De Kooning, unlike Pollock, was born abroad, in Holland, emigrating to America as a young man; and after an earlier career as a WPA muralist, he imaginatively developed what came to be the major stylistic contribution of Cubism—breaking up the representational plane to portray an object or field as seen from two or more perspectives simultaneously. The paintings that comprise his *Woman* series, done in the early fifties, evoke in impulsive and yet well-drawn strokes (and colors identical to those in the portrayed environment) a single figure as regarded from a multitude of perspectives, both vertical and horizontal, in several degrees of light and, therefore, at various moments in time; for not only are the differences between figure and environment, past and present, background and foreground, all thoroughly blurred, but nearly every major detail in this all-over and yet focused field suggests a different angle and/or shading.

Pollock's best paintings similarly flash different levels of illusionistic space; but more important for subsequent art was the sense, best seen in retrospect, that his shimmering works surpassed Cubism (as did Mondrian's) precisely by eschewing any reference to things outside painting, particularly objects normally found in three-dimensional space. "Line is freed from form and the complexity of the matrix results in a homogeneous fabric which is purely visual," notes Andrea Levin. "There is no figure-ground relationship—no illusion that the canvas 'contains objects,' or that there is an inside or

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outside to the line, or the space through which the line moves. Line doesn't describe contours or bounded shapes, but refers only to itself and is read as line, not as object." This complete meshing of image and field, content and canvas, even stasis and movement, creates a completely integrated, autonomous, and self-referring world which differs radically from the fragmented, allusive, and structured field of post-cubist painting; and as the picture created an all-encompassing world, for direct, wholly visual communication, a new and fertile possibility for painting space was defined.

By the late fifties, however, it seemed that each of these artists brought his post-European style to a terminal point, as Pollock scarcely painted in the two years before his putative suicide in 1956, and de Kooning became a most reluctant exhibitor. The decline of their work, as well as the apparent exhaustion of the styles they represented, was largely responsible for the sense of comparative lull that crept over the New York art scene in the late fifties. "Painterly Abstraction has collapsed," Clement Greenberg wrote in 1964, "not because it has become dissipated in formlessness, but because in its second generation it has produced some of the most mannered, imitative, uninspired, and repetitious art in our tradition." Yet out of this lull, as well as Pollock's example of radical possibilities, also came the opportunity permitting the proliferation of alternative styles and reputations characteristic of the sixties, for the current population of painters working seriously in America today is nearly as awesome as the sheer number who have received some tokens of respectable recognition.

Between these two totem figures and radical recent art stand several transitional painters, who initiated the directions that others, mostly younger artists, developed—Morris Louis (b. Baltimore, 1912), Ad Reinhardt (b. New York, 1913), Robert Rauschenberg (b. Port Arthur, Texas, 1925), and Jasper Johns (b. Allendale, South Carolina, 1930). Louis's innovation, dating back to 1953, consisted of pouring paint directly on unstretched, unprimed, and unsized canvas, so that not only is there no shading and no visible trace of the painter's hand, but the color and texture of the raw canvas itself remains visible; and given an unusual sensitivity to color values, as well as an ability to mix his own pigments and the willingness to use newly discovered acrylic paints, Louis initiated what came to be known as "Color Field" painting. (Moreover, his preoccupations paralleled those of less striking "Hard-Edge" works, in which blocks of solid colors are separated by clearly demarked lines.)

Ad Reinhardt was from his beginnings an abstractionist of strong left-wing sympathies (in the thirties almost a contradiction in terms), later becoming a witty polemicist for impersonal painting and a scathing critic of sin in the temple of art; in sum, he stood for pure art and moral purity. His most distinctive early paintings had geometric shapes on a multicolored field; works of the late forties favored less definitive abstract figures. By 1953, he offered canvases entirely in diverse shades of the same color, at first red and then black and blue, usually divided into squares whose slight differences in hue became more visible with the spectator's increased attention. Mixing a rational demeanor with extravagant eccentricity, as well as disclaiming the mysticism his work superficially suggested, Reinhardt also published several sets of polemical "negative rules" characteristically itemizing all the things that painting should not be, which is to say practically everything it once was; and he later claimed that those almost monochromatic canvases were "the last paintings anyone can paint." Viewing his work from the perspective of subsequent history, Lucy Lippard judges that Reinhardt's "innovations consist largely of the establishment of a valid function for nonrelational, monotonal concepts, progressive elimination of texture, color contrast, value contrast and eventually of color itself, which was replaced by a uniquely non-illusionistic painted light."

If the progress of Reinhardt's career was toward the purification of painting, Robert Rauschenberg's development ran the opposite way, toward miscegenation of media. His opening gambit was as monotonal as mature Reinhardt—a series of White Paintings (1952) numbered one, two, three, four, five, six, and something astronomical to leave room for possible duplicates (which were made in 1968); but Rauschenberg's purposes here were less an essential painting than the creation of reflective surface that would incorporate lights and images from its surrounding environment. (Reinhardt's monotonal canvases, in contrast, were intentionally nonreflective.) His distinctive collages of the middle fifties at first incorporate miscellaneous photographs, magazine pages, and other found images, creating a diffuse field in which, as he put it, there is "nothing everything is subservient to." He then mounted actual objects on fundamentally two-dimensional nonrepresentational paintings that implicitly (and skillfully) obliterated the traditional distinction between materials-for-art and junk; and Rauschenberg's example subsequently made literally everything available to painterly art, as well as establishing that one part of the picture need not dominate or even relate to the others. Later he painted his own bed, transforming another sub-aesthetic found object into something later purchased and displayed by the Museum of Modern Art (*Bed* [1955]), put a decidedly three-dimensional figure, the head of a stuffed Angora goat, into a painted field (*Monogram* [1959]), and then even added a clock to one canvas and a live radio to another (*Broadcast* [1959]), in addition to coining a new term, "combine," for painted assemblages that had three dimensions and yet were not quite sculpture. "I always thought of them as paintings," he once told an interviewer; and so freely did he mix art with "non-art" that critics were forever quoting his most famous aphorism: "Painting relates to both art and life. Neither can be made. (I try to act in that gap between the two.)" By the late sixties, Rausch-

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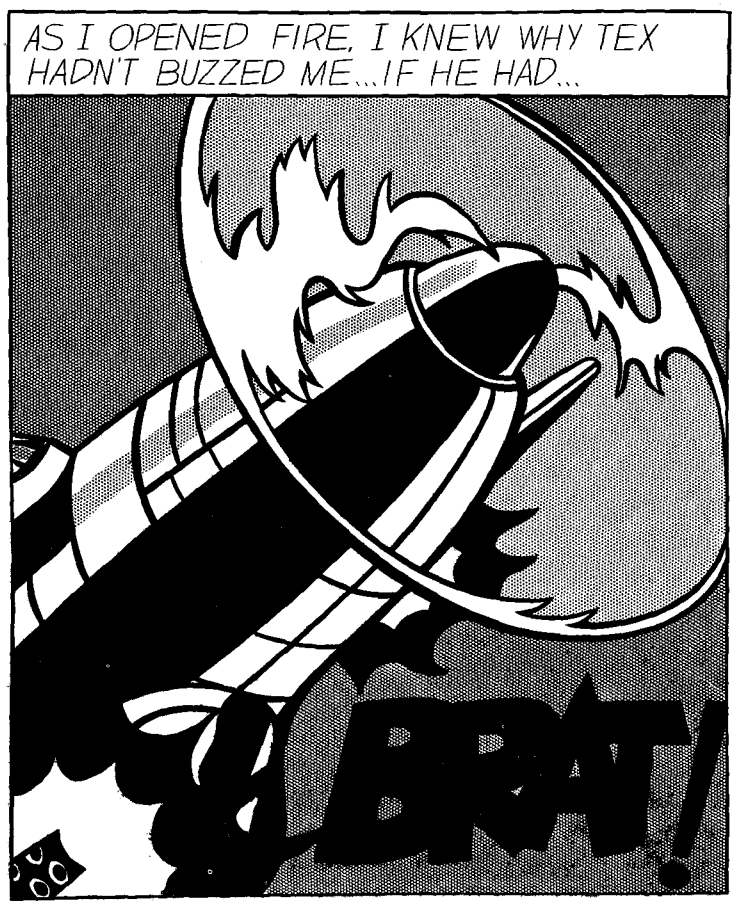
enberg was working primarily at machine and theatrical pieces, and graphics; but historically he and Allan Kaprow, more than any others, established the precedents for incorporating both elements from the outside world (if not the surrounding space as well) and the limitless possibilities of the tradition of painting, including the abandonment of painting itself. It should here be noted, however, that painterly assemblage itself did not prove too fertile a strategy in the sixties, largely because collage syntax itself seems increasingly archaic—Rauschenberg's immense *Barge* (1963), seven by thirty-three feet, perhaps climaxed the form's progress in two dimensions; but three of the more persuasive endeavors in collage include the "variable paintings," with shifting parts, of the Swedish New Yorker Oyvind Fahlstrom; the "trap paintings" of the Rumanian-Parisian Daniel Spoerri; and, especially, the supremely abundant conglomerations of the Icelandic-Parisian Gudmunder Ferro.

Jasper Johns's contribution to the new sensibility is more subtle; for while he displayed some of Rauschenberg's uninhibited, almost Dadaistic, use of aesthetically forbidden materials, his work has remained largely within the traditional format of painting or, occasionally, sculpture. Johns's sensibility also displays a more philosophical, Duchampian bent that offers cool, inscrutable objects to induce a multiple inquisitive involvement by the spectator. In looking at his famous *Target with Four Faces* (1955), one cannot help but ask: Is this a replica of a target, a collection of concentric circles, or something else? What relationship do those four sculptural bottoms of heads (noses and mouths, to be precise) have to the two-dimensional picture? Why is the target-image represented so realistically, and yet the heads so surrealistically? Do all meanings exist within the picture, or is there some symbolism here? Is this a "painting" or a "collage" or what? "I thought he was doing three things," John Cage once wrote, "five things he was doing escaped my notice." By painting a realistic image without a background, Johns followed Pollock in abolishing the discrepancy between image and field that is the core of traditional representational art, again raising the question of whether the target-image was a mechanical copy of the original target, or a nonrepresentational design (and what in this context would be the difference anyway?). In the late fifties, Johns was working with sub-aesthetic images such as the American flag, the forty-eight states in outline, and stenciled numbers, as well as such mundane objects as beer cans, a lightbulb, a flashlight, and a coffee tin filled with artist's brushes. Johns's work subsequently favored a more expressionistic painting, as paint is irregularly spread across the canvas; however, into this field he usually put such visually objective (and, thus, stylistically contrary) images as stenciled letters and numbers, or a broom (identified as such in script lettering), a cup, a ruler, a thermometer, or Buckminster Fuller's innovative map of the world—again incorporating, within his basically two-dimensional frame, images and sometimes objects unfamiliar to painting. However, it was less Johns's taste in materials than his inquisitive sensibility and searching methods that influenced subsequent painting.

Historically, the most revolutionary style of the postwar era—the one attracting the most outraged responses—was called first "New American Realism," then a few other epithets, and eventually "Pop Art"—a phrase that might seem derogatory, were it not so appropriate and generally accepted. Its exponents use not only the iconography of popular culture, such as comic-strip figures and hamburgers, but also representational techniques and materials drawn from advertising and other mass media—glossy paint, precise rendering, clean surfaces, and sometimes silkscreened reproduction: Quotations are not new in art, but what is unprecedented in this new painting is the blatantly common character of the quoted



ROY LICHTENSTEIN
"As I Opened Fire" (1964)
Collection: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Courtesy of Leo Castelli, New York

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materials and the slick manner of representation, so contrary to the painterly expressionism customarily equated with "high art." Pop Art commanded respect and influence in spite of its realism, because it was, as John I. H. Baur testified, "the first 'realist' reaction against Abstract Expressionism that was not primarily conservative in spirit." The creation of art-historically conscious painters, who had assimilated and revealed the influence of abstraction, Pop Art is primarily about art rather than the world, while commercial art, in contrast, is indubitably about the world. To complete the irony, pop painting was rapidly and widely publicized in the mass media, becoming unashamedly popular within a year of its first appearance.

One of Pop's several strains, exemplified by James Rosenquist, uses both the scale and flat colors as well as the sentimentally realistic style and visible panel-separating lines of billboard art (a trade Rosenquist himself once practiced) to create large, glossy paintings which, like his classic ten-by-eighty-six-foot *F-111* (1965) or his equally large *Horse Blinders* (1969), are full of incongruous images (unlike billboard ads), so that their satirical effect evokes more of the American nightmare than its dream, as well as more surrealism than representational realism. As Harold Rosenberg remarked, "This was advertising art advertising itself as art that hates advertising." Red Groom's massive, sketchily realistic portraits of people and settings are usually more sympathetic toward their subject; some of them, like his long and large *Loft on 26th Street* (1966), impose standing cutouts of lifelike figures on painted fields.

In another strain of Pop, Roy Lichtenstein's enlargements of comic-strip images—so refined in their realism that they even reproduce the Ben Day dots characteristic of comic-book illustrations—implicitly asked the kinds of aesthetic questions about image and artifact more familiar to Johns (Lichtenstein also executed dotted reproductions, faintly parodic, of classic modern paintings, and then sculptures of stylistically out-of-date objects); yet many of his images, such as *Hot Dog* (1962), once enlarged and exposed for their own shape, reveal certain archetypal resonances more typical of Henry Moore's sculpture or abstract art.

The theme of ironic displacement, which is to say the incongruous relation between the identifiable image and its model, informs not only Lichtenstein's highly comic paintings and the portraits of Pop stars by the English artist Peter Blake, but also the Pop sculpture of Claes Oldenburg and paintings of Tom Wesselman and Andy Warhol. The former's most stunning pictures set sketchily rendered nude ladies in fields of Americana more accurate in detail than total impression, while his *Interior No. 3* (1964) incorporates into its painted canvas (perhaps following Rauschenberg) two real 7-Up bottles, a kitchen clock, and a working radio; and subsequent Wesselman includes canvases cut into the shape of the represented form, like *Mouth No. 10* (1967), thereby eliminating background from the painted image. In all, the Pop artists, like Rauschenberg and Johns before them, made available to contemporary painting whole classes of imagery previously considered beyond the provinces of art; and although the founders of this genre, each of whom displayed his own distinct style and artistic ancestry, became the most successful exponents of a fashion that subsequently spread around the world (British Pop, for instance, emphasizing narrative), neither they nor younger painters have in recent years significantly enlarged or developed the vocabulary of this way of working. A by-product of Pop's success, however, has been a renewed interest in representational painters, such as Philip Pearlstein, Chuck Close, and Gerald Gooch, "super-realists" who are able stylistically to transcend earlier portraiture and yet capture human figures more profoundly than can the verisimilitude of either photography or past representational art; or Jack Beal and Konrad Klapcheck, both of whom favor objects and scenes without people; yet in contemporary terms, their aesthetic effort seems largely misguided.

As Andy Warhol is the most audacious, and thus perhaps the most profoundly American, of the Pop artists, his career in progress is frequently offensive; yet much of his work in retrospect seems systematically, and thus intentionally, designed to break several conventional rules of the trade. Originally a commercial artist with a particular reputation for drawing shoes, Warhol painted popular iconography as early as 1960; and he was probably the first painter to use silkscreening processes to transfer photographs and advertising imagery to canvas. From here onward his art was a succession of absurd yet significant—serious, yet ridiculous; naive, yet cunning; stupid, yet consequential—objects and gestures. In his paintings, for instance, found images, mostly familiar, are transformed—enlarged, recolored, reshaded—to emphasize their pictorial, if not painterly, qualities and often repeated interminably to suggest mental hallucination. Warhol, along with hired hands, often uses duplicating procedures to make several almost identical canvases or to populate a canvas with numerous copies of a single photographic image, usually of horrifying public events—*Atomic Bomb* (1963), *Car Crash* (1963), *Gangster Funeral* (1962), *Electric Chair* (1964-8), *Race Riot* (1964), among other paintings. The most outrageous early pieces reproduced neat rows of Coca-Cola bottles (1962), or the familiar mailing sticker that reads *Handle With Care—Glass—Thank You* (1962), ubiquitous *Dollar Bills* (1962) or, most tauntingly, *32 Soup Cans* (1962), followed by paintings of individual *Campbell's soup cans* (1963-7) in garishly inappropriate colors. Reductive and yet enhancing duplicating processes also manufactured a series of photographically real but incongruously colored portraits of da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* (1963), Jacqueline Kennedy in *Jackie* (1964), Marilyn Monroe in *Marilyn* (1964), and Elizabeth Taylor in *Liz* (1965), implicitly showing, perhaps, how those ubiquitous faces have assumed the archetypal qualities

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of the Blessed Mother. (Innumerable repetitions apparently created the mythical sense of possessing an image—in quantity, curiously, lies a psychological quality.)

He and his associates also produced "sculpture"—painted wooden volumes of realistically imitated grocery-packing cartons for Brillo, Campbell's Tomato Juice, Mott's Apple Juice, as well as helium-filled pillows attached to the floor by strings of variable length—and films that portray nothing, or everything; more than eight hours of a man sleeping or the Empire State Building passing into darkness. Warhol allowed others to make films released in his name, confessed that he merely supervised the manufacture of paintings he later signed ("This way I don't have to work on my objects at all"), opened one of the first environmental discothèques, sponsored a supremely monotonous rock band, made paintings and films intentionally for commercial advertisers (thus does vice imitate art imitating vice), and generously let photographers use his aluminum-foil-lined studio to take *their* pictures. In the end, he has done almost everything an artist is supposed not to do, such as shamelessly selling out to all the mass media (and discrediting his profession in many eyes); and the ultimate seriousness of his purposes can always be questioned. Yet, amidst all the debris of his enterprise are genuine works of visual acuity and a defiant adventurousness challenging the pieties of critical scrutiny and eventually deserving of critical respect.

If Rauschenberg and Johns were, each in his own way, the progenitors of Pop, Morris Louis, himself responding to suggestions in the Abstract Expressionists Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Helen Frankenthaler and Pollock (and by the critic Clement Greenberg), generated "Color-Field" painting, self-referring works, simple in form, that emphasize not the visible forms of gestural abstraction but the different textures of variously applied paints, the relationships of colors within that field, and, in some cases, the possible subtle shadings of a single hue. After Louis's premature death in 1962, the younger masters of this way of working have been Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski, both of whom acknowledge Louis in favoring acrylic paints. However, while Noland generally uses a variety of radiant colors, Olitski deals in fewer, quieter shades in more diaphanous textures (created by spraying his canvases); so that not only is color freed from drawn shape but his paintings display atmospheric, if not ethereal, qualities. Noland's works are more rooted within the painting's frame and a regular design as he divides his canvas into roughly drawn but sharp-edged geometric shapes, such as circles within circles, or a succession of chevrons across a canvas stood on its points or simple long horizontal bands (extending as far as twenty feet, or further than a single glance can assimilate), each of which has its own unmodulated color—in all examples, a precise and sometimes symmetrical structure. Through such scrupulously geometric patterning he avoids references to earlier ways of structuring a modern painting. Olitski, in contrast, has fields of amorphous shapes, structurally without apparent relation, each with its own color, and then pools of color blending into each other (following a Mark Rothko idea dating back to the middle fifties), and more recently, just one color articulately shaded into a spectrum of hues; but on the edge, almost punctuating the field, is usually a solidly painted strip of another color which either roots the canvas to another world or compromises the painting's particular achievement. Among other painters particularly skilled at a coloristic emphasis are Darby Bannard, Edward Avedisian, Herb Perr, Dan Christensen, and two older figures, one of whom had been neglected until recently—Hans Hofmann and Rollin Crampton. Another innovation, patently indebted to Louis, is Sam Gilliam's unstretched color canvases draped or hung from a ceiling.

This emphasis upon the undistracted experience of color itself relates to the use of unusual surfaces for ultimately painterly ends. Michelangelo Pistoletto paints lifesize realistic figures on the fringes of his mirror-finished stainless-steel surfaces so that the spectator standing before them sees himself at the center of the painted scene (and it could be claimed that the work of art remains incomplete until the spectator enters the picture), and Billy Al Bengston paints symmetrical patterns (stacked chevrons, crosses, hearts, etc.) on aluminum surfaces previously sprayed to increase their shimmering capabilities, as well as on Masonite and Formica, which is sometimes hammered, crumpled, or folded, always with unusual sensitivity to the material itself and paint's relation to various surfaces. The shimmer in Hugh Lifson's *Water* (1968) comes from wrapping cellophane across a canvas, itself topped with painted aluminum foil, and the successful illusion of great depth in certain recent Sylvia Stone works comes from painting small geometric patches of black acrylic on Plexiglas which can be observed from either side. Furthermore, the examples of Louis and Olitski, along with recent speculations by the ageless Bauhausman Xanti Schawinsky, suggest there are still alternative ways of applying paint to canvas.

Another development of the sixties grew out of the widespread use of psychedelic drugs, not only for psychiatric and hedonistic purposes but also to reveal psychological domains unknown to mundane consciousness; and just as Allen Ginsberg created a corpus of major poetry indebted to various chemicals, so some painters have expressed psychedelically-induced material on two-dimensional canvas. This art is related to Surrealism in both aesthetic purpose (the representation of interior life) and practical technique (impulsive automatism); but the best Psychedelic painting remains considerably different in pictorial style from both classic Surrealism and that ersatz "Art Nouveau" figuration that briefly dominated "psychedelic" poster art. Isaac Abrams, perhaps the most accomplished painter in the genre (and, indicatively, an artist who painted little before his involvement with psyche-

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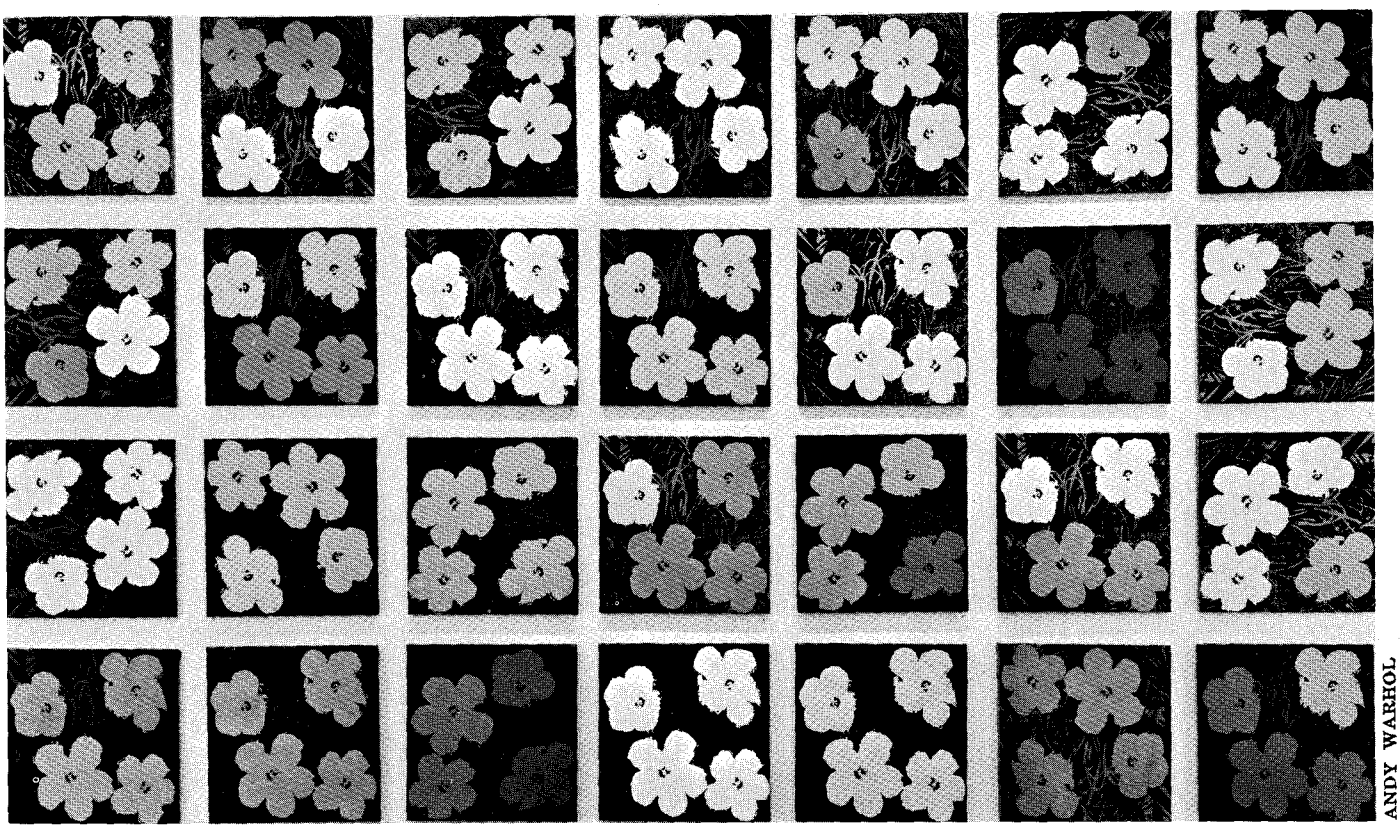

ANDY WARHOL
"Flowers" (1964)
Courtesy of Leo Castelli, New York

delics), creates brightly colored, highly integrated internal landscapes (or "ecstatic inscapes," to one critic) which represent a kind of psychological self-portraiture full of nonrealistically arranged natural imagery, such as flowers, and other forms of rather symmetrical shape. Psychedelic expressionism raises the likelihood of technology's further impact upon the sensibilities of painters; for not only is all nonrepresentational art of the past century implicitly a response to the invention of photography, but the new electronic media have, as McLuhan suggests, decidedly revamped the circuitry of contemporary creative minds. The impact of psychedelic drugs is more individual than collective, like television's influence, but the result is similarly the creation of a sensibility distinctly different from that informing previous work.

In distinct contrast to Psychedelic Expressionism, which very much represents an expansion of both psychological vision and pictorial imagery, one major direction in recent painting emphasizes the minimizing of artistic means—the rejection not only of familiar images and illusory dimensionality but also of compositional asymmetry and articulated color-shading. "The word *rejective*," writes Lucy R. Lippard, "stands for a phenomenon of the 1960s concerned primarily with the specificity of aesthetic objects and aesthetic experience. Rejection does not suggest attrition, but rather a strengthening process by which excess and redundancy are shed and essence retained." Out of these imposed aesthetic constraints comes a concern with capabilities intrinsic to painting—illusory power and visual ordering—as well as the desire to rescue painting from those miscegenating and representational directions already discussed. Within this general drift are several distinct strains—among them an Optical Art concerned with illusory visual activity, a Geometric painting; a truly Minimal (or all but thoroughly rejective) Art, whose most extreme form is a truly monotonal canvas; yet in all kinds reigns the custom of extending the reductive image or pattern to the edges of the canvas.

Optical Art consists of abstract works not optical in themselves but designed to induce a particular illusory "optical" effect, usually the ambiguous perception of where one area ends and another begins (such as pattern and field, or foreground and background), and/or the sense of shimmering or movement in a patently fixed field. If one stares fixedly at, say, Larry Poons's *Nixe's Mate* (1964), which stands six feet by nine feet four inches, the ellipses will begin to dance away from their background (creating further illusions of both dimensionality and after-image), just as will the blocks of color in Piet Mondrian's classic *Broadway Boogie-Woogie* (1944), the geometric shapes in Richard Anuszkiewicz's masterful *Knowledge and Disappearance* (1961), and the stripes in Victor Vasarely's more facile paintings; and while the fixed images in works by the Argentine-born Parisian Julio le Parc change radically as the spectator shifts his angle of vision, so the illusory movements rapidly stimulated by Bridget Riley's *Current* (1964) are almost too much for the eye and mind to bear. What makes

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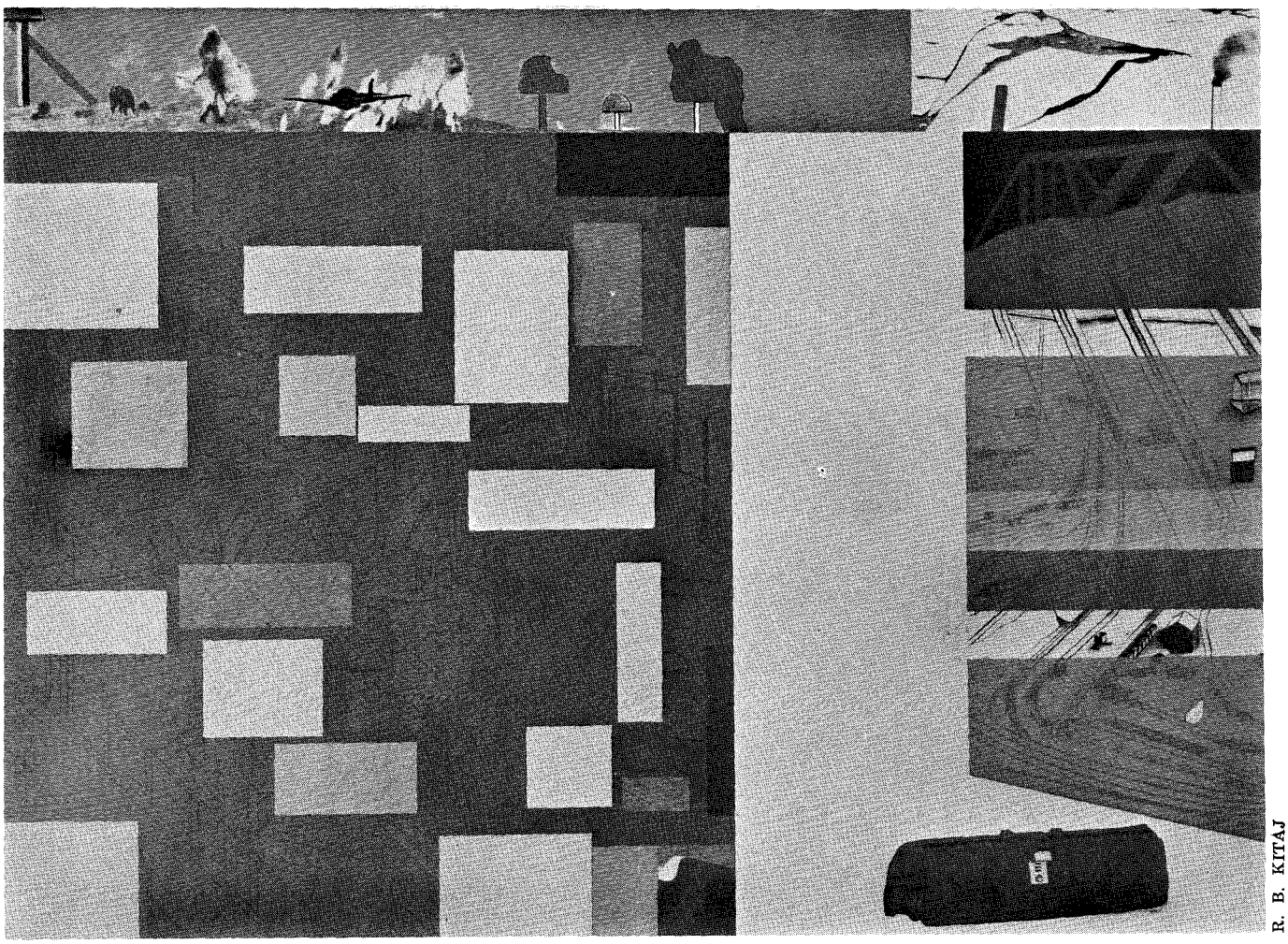
Optical Art radically different from earlier abstraction is not only its favoring of symmetrical design but also that a work exists primarily to induce unusual visual experiences that finally transcend aesthetic values—and in this respect, curiously, it links with certain maximally active machines or environments designed to stimulate, usually through sensory overload, the psychedelic experience. This radically shifts the focus of art away from the two-dimensional canvas to the responses of the eye itself—an unprecedented redirecting of perceptual emphasis to the sensory equipment that Optical painting shares with other strains of contemporary art. This optical way of working has admittedly been a limited adventure, as the alternatives within the technique seem less than innumerable; nonethless, certain paintings by Poons, Riley, Anuszkiewicz, Heinz Mack, Jesus-Raphael Soto, and Yaacov Agam are among the outstanding works of recent two-dimensional art.

The tradition for recent Geometric abstractions grows out of the paintings of Kasimir Malevich and Piet Mondrian, its most eminent recent ancestors in America being Josef Albers and Burgoyne Diller. Here, unlike Optical painting, the concern is not blatant visual illusionism (seeing something that actually is not there, such as the semblance of either activity or three dimensions) but more subtle qualities and questions of visual structure and aesthetic identity. The foremost recent innovator here has been Frank Stella, hailed before he turned twenty-five, whose early canvases consist of regularly patterned geometric shapes, such as squares within squares, painted with common colors in strokes evenly applied to the canvases' edges so that no figure could be distinguished from any background, as well as no form from any content or image from larger shape. The spectator's experience of these faintly mechanical paintings ideally appreciates such strictly visual virtues as the relation of one color to another, the solidity of geometric shapes, and complexity in elemental simplicity, as well as Stella's thoroughly cerebral deductive solution to certain problems in painting's recent history. In 1960, the twenty-four-year-old artist told an undergraduate audience:

> Finally I had to face two problems: one was spatial and the other methodological. In the first case I had to do something about relational painting, *i.e.*, the balancing of the various parts of the painting with and against each other. The obvious answer was symmetry—make it the same all over. The question still remained, though, of how to do this in depth. A



R. B. KITAJ
"The Sorrows of Belgium" (1965)

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symmetrical image of configuration placed on an open ground is not balanced out in the illusionistic space. The solution I arrived at—and there are probably others, although I know of only one, color density—forces illusionistic space out of the painting at a constant rate by using a regulated pattern. The remaining problem was simply to find a method of paint application which followed and completed the design solution. This was done by using the house painter's technique and tools.

In other word, Stella's first answer to the question of how to organize an abstract canvas, after all the solutions already posited in modern art, required all-over artificial regularity (and here he historically precedes Noland). After establishing a frontier that won its admirers and imitators, such as David Norvos's geometric fields filled with the letter "L" or Miriam Schapiro's shrewdly colored geometries, Stella explored the other solution, espoused earlier by Louis and Noland, of color relations within a regular design. This later work also developed another aspect of his earlier painting—the eccentrically shaped canvas, where the shape of the frame usually determines the work's internal forms and the painting's theme is inevitably the relation between image and frame. "This reduced illusionism to a minimum," writes Barbara Rose, "and further identified the image with the canvas surface." In the aluminum paintings of 1960, for instance, the notch at the bottom of the canvas corresponds to all the irregularities in the basically rectangular pattern; in *Oil* (1963), the trapezoidal shape of both the entire canvas and the hole in the middle echoes the lines traversing the entire field; the frame and shapes of *Tuftonboro I* (1966) follow from a triangle joined to a cutaway rectangle. Works like these, as well as those by the unswerving elder geometricist Ilya Bolotowsky, exhibited the most resonant and unquestionable use of shaped canvases. Stella's *Sigjerli II* (1968) is a complete circle pierced by two sets of parallel diagonals at right angles to each other (like two pairs of compasses overlapping), separating circular concentric stripes of various (and, for Stella, unusually bright) colors and, sometimes, various kinds of paints—works that are as impersonally elegant and patently beautiful as his earlier paintings; yet in the use of such aggressive hues there is both an illusion of dimensionality and the suggestion of emotion—two qualities that Stella would have avoided before. His professional success paralleled the development of a self-consciously empirical structuralist art criticism that excelled particularly at analyzing this kind of painting, to the neglect and/or misunderstanding of both other styles and artistic intermedia.

"Minimal" was the rage for 1966-67, in a decade when one or another style of painting seemed to have its reigning year; and though the word was used facilely to characterize anything whose subject matter is insubstantial by traditional standards, it refers more accurately to works, usually of grandiose size, with a scant minimum of discernible figuration—perhaps *at most* a large expanse of solid color penetrated by lines or one set of visible marks, so that the painting functions as a field, rather than a composition, and the degree of reduction is a rough measure of the work's ambition and integrity. In Barnett Newman's *Day One*, finished as early as 1951, a field of solid, uninflected orange, eleven by four feet, is broken only by two stripes of lighter orange, one on each vertical edge of the painting; *Ulysses* (1952), approximately the same size, is vertically divided into two neatly separated shades of blue; and his later large canvases, especially those done in sequence, similarly depend upon allusions to symmetry. In Newman's magnificent and yet preeminently subtle *The Stations of the Cross* (1958-64), which is a series of fourteen paintings six and one half by five feet, the traditional Biblical narrative is subjected to Minimal imagery (usually two vertical stripes of various widths and shapes, against a background field of raw canvas), where the absence of familiar iconography becomes a commentary on the classic myth as well as an echo of the simple cosmological forms of primitive art. Indicatively eschewing symbolic titles and other extrinsic resonances, Jo Baer's all but monotonal works, usually done in a series with an arbitrary number of variations, have a frame of one or two colors around a field of yet another color, so that the components vary for the duration of the set.

The inevitable next step (which, in contemporary art, is always taken) demands the abolition of that stripe or frame for field solely in one color—not like Ad Reinhardt's late works, which divide into rectangles of nearly identical but perceptibly different hues; but truly monochromatic works of art, where painting is usually the sole reality and there is little to be immediately seen but much to be finally perceived. The result of such a severe constraint has been not a series of identical works but a remarkable variety of ontological explorations, encompassing Rauschenberg's monotonal reflecting canvases of common white housepaint; Yves Klein's prophetic, mystical (or egomaniacal) obsession, starting in 1957, with a certain shade of blue ("International Klein Blue"); Barnett Newman's vertical canvas strip encased in a metallic frame, *The Wild* (1950), and his fourteenth and last image in *The Stations of the Cross*, which in context inevitably symbolizes the transfiguration; the hanging transparent sheets of David Lee; and particular paintings by Ralph Humphrey, Robert Ryman, Brice Marden, and, by the late sixties, Jules Olitski—all of which, to quote Lippard again, "emphasize the fact of painting as painting, surface as surface, paint as paint, in an inactive, unequivocal manner." Indeed, Ryman also mounts his unframed white surfaces as close to their support as possible, sometimes creating the illusion of a rectangular hole in the wall; Humphrey's reflect light as refracted by colored pigment; and certain Robert Irwin paintings resemble Optical Art in that if they are observed fixedly from a distance they reveal tiny specks of

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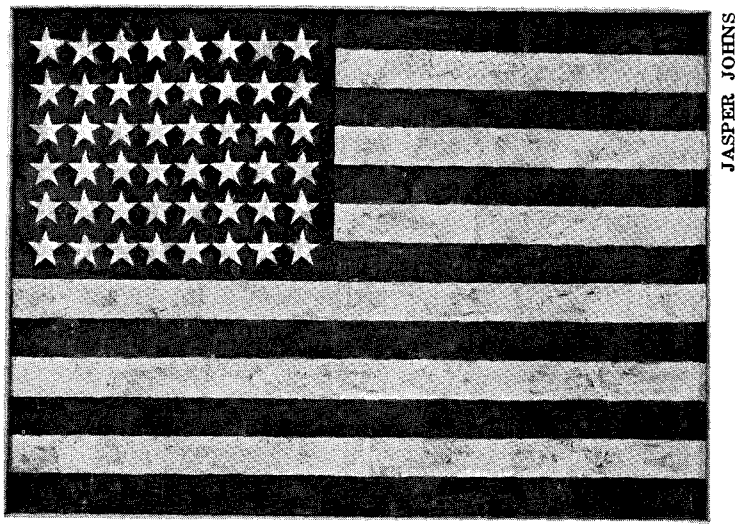
different colors forming their own patterns and/or an illusory haze floating a few inches in front of the canvas. All but the Newman, Rauschenberg, and Irwin works stand as factual paintings and demand scrupulously empirical perception, with especial attention to coloristic qualities unadulterated by shape; and the latter two also function as inducements, or stimulants, to unusual perceptual experiences. Furthermore, in Newman's recent large canvases, among other works, is the growing ambition to envelop the range of sight (and feeling) in an expanse of one color (and yet remain within the two-dimensional frame)—an idea harking back to Kasimir Malevich's increasingly influential essay on *Suprematism* (1927) with its invocation, "Swim! The free white sea, infinity, lies before you."

Reflecting an aesthetic self consciousness distinctly of the time, Jim Dine favors paradox and parody, mostly by allusion to current problems in painting or works in the familiar tradition—in a Johnsian puzzler (that also echoes Duchamp), for instance, an unshaded, rather blinding electric lamp sits in front of the painting; the inscription at the bottom of the supremely tall, bitonal *Wall Painting for Sylvia Guiray* (1967) announces what color and brands of paint the artist favored; several works incorporate a small color chart of the hues used within the painting, and so forth. Dine attaches large objects to his paintings, yet they are neither sculpture nor assemblage; and in *Chrome Life, the Silverpaint Jacket* (1964), the peculiar visual effects stem from shining the lamp directly against the painting. Other strains of clever painting-about-painting include Elaine Sturtevant's shamelessly precise imitations of contemporary classics; John Clem Clarke's patently clumsy and ridiculously miscolored reproductions of familiar masterpieces, and Malcolm Morley's ironically precise renditions of very mundane images, the parodic extensions of the Canadian artist Iain Baxter, who, in one instance, connects to a reproduction of Noland's stripes real ribbons that continue the same color and dangle from the sides of the canvas. A final innovation is a scrupulously situational painting, analogous to impermanent situational sculpture; for here the artist (such as Lawrence Weiner, Sol Lewitt, or Lynda Benglis) puts paint directly on the walls and floor of an exhibition, which is to say that, when cleaned off its mooring, the work of art ceases to exist.



JASPER JOHNS
"Flag" (1954)
Collection: Philip Johnson
Courtesy of Leo Castelli, New York

It was the Abstract Expressionist Franz Kline who offered this rule: "The final test of painting is: Does the painter's emotion come across?" However, to a subsequent generation of painters, few standards are less relevant than this. The new painting, except for Psychedelic Expressionism, comes from decidedly objective creative processes—not only is the easel all but universally eschewed, and the recent work usually abstract, but paint is handled in rather anonymous ways. Scarcely a work will reveal much that is personal about its individual creator, though a body of achievement might offer a few more clues (such as Ad Reinhardt's obsession with purity). Most major paintings could also be stood on their heads without interrupting their communication. Beyond that, in most strains of reductive painting the work demands perceptions previously regarded as "phenomenal," rather than "artistic" or "aesthetic," thereby altering if not repudiating the traditional procedures of painterly comprehension; and perhaps in this discriminating analysis of such phenomenal experience lie the foundations of a revolutionary new aesthetic. Although painting remains less responsive to such a primary cause of stylistic change as technological advance, this art transforms, as well as survives, by appropriating new materials and also subjecting the dominant premises and techniques to continual questioning and redefinition. (Prints, in contrast, nearly always exploit rather than exceed or transcend accepted two-dimensional styles.)

Indicatively, in addition to respecting the absolute flatness of the canvas, the new painting confronts the three classic modern problems—the use of color (emphasized largely by Matisse), the organization of the canvas's visual field (Picasso) and the potential perceptual experiences peculiar to a painted field (Mondrian). All styles discussed above move beyond both Fauvism and Cubism, as well as the American development, Abstract Expressionism, and in this stylistic metamorphosis lie symptoms of the great changes in the creative sensibility. "It is no accident," writes Robert Rosenblum, "that most pictoral values affirmed by the older generation have been denied by the newer one." Just as recent art repudiates the lull of 1959 by showing that alternatives are still possible within the art of deploying pigment on a two-dimensional surface, so future painting is likely to open terrain beyond (and unlike) current or past conventions.

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THE DEFEAT OF THE INTELLECT

We have boxed it into a corner, where
it snarls and writhes in a terrible odor
burning rubber could not cover.
It hates us, in its furry outer logic,
as a child hates its father
in guilt, for guilt, when it is time to.

Now it is time to fly at the center,
to become the arrow. We will feather
the eye of the target, enlightenment
like a jar of fireflies for keeping
small worlds lit. They are like white
pills, the chaste ladies of fast fortune;

the light we can divide and conquer.
But there is another light, beyond
the jar, the shining bodies, the world
we can say, it surrounds the love we
do not luggage, like an Egypt full of
Jews it makes no sense.

MARVIN BELL

TWO POEMS

Fish
are the soul of delight.
You can never be better than your father.
The knuckles the face makes
bring you up short in the water.
Did you come here to drown?

The flowers would eat anyone
if it meant a living. Spring the locks!,
loosen the belts, down from the roof:
the *borshch* is getting colder
and my father is getting older,
late father is getting older.

One wants a song for Mother,
since what we eat we are. Mother,
it's me, calling from under the water
for a hot meal and memory's candle,
for fish, feather, foul and man,
for a stone that would reach me.

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Thomas Thompson

THE SCRANTON COMMISSION REPORT

At the wedding of wisdom and power,
wisdom is always waiting at the church

More: . . . But I still can't help thinking that if you could only overcome your aversion to court life, your advice would be extremely useful to the public. Which means that it's your positive duty, as a good man, to give it. You know what your friend Plato says—that a happy state of society will never be achieved, until philosophers are kings, or kings take to studying philosophy. Well, just think how infinitely remote that happy state must remain, if philosophers won't even condescend to give kings a word of advice!

Raphael: Oh, philosophers aren't as bad as all that. They'd be only too glad to offer advice—in fact many of them have done so already in their published works—if only people in power would listen to them. And that's doubtless what Plato meant. He realized that kings are too deeply infected with wrong ideas in childhood to take any philosopher's advice, unless they become philosophers themselves—as he learned by experience with Dionysius. What do you suppose would happen if I started telling a king to make sensible laws, or trying to expel the deadly germs of bad ones from his mind? I'd be promptly thrown out, or merely treated as a figure of fun.

For instance, just imagine in France, at a top-secret meeting of the cabinet. The king himself is in the chair, and round the table sit all his expert advisers, earnestly discussing ways and means of solving the following problems: How can his majesty keep a grip on Milan, and get Naples back into his clutches? How can he conquer Venice, and complete the subjection of Italy? How can he then establish control over Flanders, Brabant, and finally the whole of Burgundy?—not to mention all the other countries that he has already invaded in his dreams . . . .

At this point, while all these mighty forces are being set in motion, and all these worthy gentlemen are producing rival plans and campaigns, up gets little Raphael, and proposes a complete reversal of policy. I advise the king to forget about Italy and stay at home. I tell him that France is already almost too big for one man to govern properly, so he really needn't worry about acquiring extra territory.

I then refer to an incident in the history of Nolandia, a country just southeast of Utopia. On the strength of some ancient marriage, the king of Nolandia thought he had a hereditary claim to another kingdom, so his people started a war to get it for him. Eventually they won, only to find that the kingdom in question was quite as much trouble to keep as it had been to acquire. There were constant threats of internal rebellion and external aggression. They were always having to fight either for their new subjects or against them. They never got a chance to demobilize, and in the meantime they were being ruined. All their money was going out of the country, and men were losing their lives to pay for someone else's petty ambitions. Conditions at home were no safer than they'd been during the war, which had lowered moral standards, by encouraging people to kill and steal. There was no respect whatever for the law, because the king's attention was divided between the two kingdoms, so that he couldn't concentrate properly on either.

Seeing that this hopeless situation would continue indefinitely, if they didn't do something about it, the Nolandians finally decided on a course of action, which was to ask the king, quite politely, which kingdom he wants to keep. . . .

I also remind the French King that even if he does start all these wars and create chaos in all these different countries, he's still quite liable to find in the end that he has ruined himself and destroyed his people for nothing. I therefore advise him to concentrate on the kingdom that his ancestors handed down to him, and make it as beautiful and as prosperous as he can, to love his own subjects and deserve their love, to live among them and govern them kindly, and to give up all ideas of territorial expansion, because he's got more than enough to deal with already.

Now tell me, my dear More, how do you think he'll react to my advice? . . . If I said things like that to people who were quite determined to take the opposite view, do you think they'd listen to me?

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More: Of course they wouldn't, and I can't say I'd blame them. Frankly, I don't see the point of saying things like that, or of giving advice that you know they'll never accept. What possible good could it do? How can they be expected to take in a totally unfamiliar line of thought, which goes against all their deepest prejudices? That sort of thing is quite fun in a friendly conversation, but at a cabinet meeting, where major decisions of policy have to be made, such philosophizing would be completely out of place.

Raphael: That's exactly what I was saying—there's no room at court for philosophy.

—More, Thomas, *Utopia*, Book I, trans. Paul Turner, Penguin Classics edition, pps. 57-63.

More published his *Utopia* in 1516 and long before that there was a solid tradition of advice being given, either gratuitously or upon command, to men of power by men of wisdom. While history records more failures than successes in the attempt to graft power and wisdom together in the conduct of human affairs, still the persistence of the attempts testifies to the persistence of the hope that it can somehow be done. The utopian advice that More offered in the sixteenth century in his playful and ironic style was offered earlier in a spirit of high seriousness by Plato and St. Thomas Aquinas. In those earlier periods, one is tempted to think, the rational mind was more confident of its ability to influence the course of practical affairs. By the sixteenth century the very presumption that men of power could be guided, in any realistic sense, by men of wisdom and cosmopolitan tolerance was being hooted out of existence. At almost precisely the same time that More was publishing his rueful defense of a reasonable human life to an audience of unreasonable European kings and commoners, Machiavelli was offering to one of the lesser Medicis an anti-utopian recipe book devoted to the art of getting power without bothering about wisdom. The keynote of More's book was the supremacy of reason —along with the recognition of certain practical difficulties in getting reason adopted—while the keynote of Machiavelli's description of power politics was the centrality of propaganda and manipulation of popular sentiment as these tactics related to the retention and expansion of the prince's power. Machiavelli was convinced that a powerful prince could unite Italy and save her from piecemeal exploitation by the greedy monarchs of Europe, and he pointed out that a prince who took too seriously the maxims of fair play and humaneness would surely lose his throne. More, though he was far from being unaware of the harsh imperatives of political power, was convinced, in spite of all his doubts, that power could be combined with humane reason. He might even have thought that a Christian monarch was possible as against Machiavelli's clear persuasion that Christianity was simply an instrument of propaganda in helping to gain the prince's end: pure power.

It is the same today. Nationalism and personal power, in the minds of important rulers, loom larger than wisdom or humanity and if there is a choice to be made, as there was in Machiavelli's as in Scranton's day, then the men of power do not hesitate too long in adopting Machiavellian imperatives in preference to the rational cosmopolitanism of dispassionately humane—but powerless—scholars and commission members. In Machiavelli's homeland, not long ago, President Nixon—presumably the same man who asked Mr. Scranton to assemble the wisdom of his commission on problems of campus unrest—stood up and lectured the Pope himself on the power of the Sixth Fleet, while at the same time graciously acknowledging the pontiff's awesome spiritual power. The president would not be so *gauche* as Stalin was in his famous inquiry about the number of divisions commanded by the Pope, but one wonders whether the ideological differences are all that important in the face of the concentration upon practical power and its perquisites in the minds of important rulers.

After the number of study groups and commissions we have had to endure since the Eisenhower era in these "days of crisis," it is terribly tempting to take the view that More ascribes to Raphael Hythloday. Why give men of power wise advice you know they are constitutionally incapable of understanding? Or, if they understand and cannot, for good political reasons, adopt the advice and act upon it, why in blazes do they ask for it in the first place?

With Vice President Agnew's righteous and colorful rhetoric ringing in one's ears, it is again tempting to see the situation in Machiavellian terms and to conclude that men of power ask for advice only in order to scapegoat the out-of-power liberal establishment. This temptation is reinforced when we observe that Mr. Agnew was able to assemble his ritual alliterations and condemnations without, it seems, even reading the report. (Doubtless his efficient staff had briefed him on the highlights and had prepared his comments according to recipe. Men of real power are much too busy nowadays to read; they require not only ghost-writers but also ghost-readers.)

President Nixon, at this writing too busy dodging eggs and brickbats in San Jose to be reading long commission reports, sent college and university administrators the statements of J. Edgar Hoover and Sidney Hook, but pointedly—so far— he has ignored the report of his own commission. Still, I prefer to think, and against the weight of evidence, that when men of power ask for advice on how to govern they are asking for more than

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"The Scranton Report," Text of the Findings of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest, as reprinted in **The Chronicle of Higher Education**, vol. V, no. 2, October 5, 1970. $1.00.

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a strictly Machiavellian analysis would permit. Once one has power, and even assuming a considerable appetite in the exercise of it, there also comes to be at least an intermittent humility in the recognition of the terrible scope and complexity of the problems that one faces. It becomes clear, or so I imagine, that the responsibility is as terrible as the breadth and the complexity of the riddles that face the decision-maker. He *does* want help. He *does* feel the need of wisdom, if only to diffuse the otherwise unbearable sense of doing this or doing that without much in the way of factual or moral ballast. Forming a commission helps to relieve the conscience even though it also provides a whipping-boy for public consumption. Naturally the man of power wants the wise to underwrite his own deeply-felt prejudices and his own inner moral convictions. Those convictions need bolstering precisely because of the loneliness and isolation of the man at the top. When the sought-after wisdom itself reveals the complex and many-sided nature of the circumstances under study, however, what was hoped for as balm for the faltering conscience of the man of power often turns out to be a nasty public irritant. Something like this tragicomic reversal of the situation seems so far to have been the fate of the Scranton Report.

Much of the report is not worth summarizing in this review—and the remark is not intended to sound either condescending or condemnatory. The reason is that the bulk of the report is the kind of liberal, tolerant, journeyman common sense in matters where tempers are high and polarization threatens that we could have predicted well before the report actually came from the press. Having said that these portions, the bulk of the report, are not worth summarizing, I have to go back on my word, selectively, in order to defend my judgment of those portions.

It should be remembered that the occasion of the report was the tragic events at Kent State on whose heels followed the violence at Jackson State. The Jackson State massacre took place on the night of May 14th, and by the end of that month some 2,500 colleges had experienced protest and disruption to some degree. No question that here was a problem that cried out for all the wisdom a statesman could get. And the report, in a headpiece addressed "To the American People" proclaims that the "crisis on the American campuses has no parallel in the history of the nation" and that the "crisis has roots in the divisions of American society as deep as any since the Civil War." The same headpiece goes on to divide the crisis into two basic elements: a crisis of violence and a crisis of understanding. (We will return to this analysis of the twin roots of the crisis.) Moreover, this headpiece goes on to say, to attempt to repress the violence with counterviolence will only radicalize the moderates. It will create more violence, which in its turn will require even harsher repression, and so on down the road from implicit civil war to real civil war. The nation has practically chosen up sides and is waiting, uncertainly poised, to respond to a signal (like another Cambodian adventure or another campus shootout) to move so far towards domestic conflagration that the impetus may be unstoppable.

There are, then, two related crises. The crisis of violence is not very difficult to deal with, not at least in the mode in which a report like this one can. Given what has by now become the conventional wisdom of confrontation and counterconfrontation, it would be insanity to prescribe stiffer police and National Guard action as a genuine cure for the national crisis of violence we are said to face. Any reasonable man—any reasonable cop, for that matter—is already persuaded that while violence cannot be tolerated, still the amount of police action utilized must be delicately and minutely adjusted to halt the illegal violence without endangering innocent bystanders or the police or, even, the perpetrators of the violence. Anything more would be illegal action in the attempt to prevent the occurrence of illegal action. And even radiclibs and troglodytic conservatives should be able to agree that two wrongs do not make a right, just as illegal force does not—with legal justification—properly prevent illegal violence. We would thus expect the report to attempt a series of simple distinctions between protest, disruption, and terroristic violence. We are not disappointed. The recommendation is that the university not attempt to choke off protest. Protest, the report points out, is a constitutional right, a right that students as citizens have and which the university must protect and encourage—even when the target happens to be the university itself. So far so good—except that it is devastating to think that a group of wise men have to formally tell the nation that its constitutional rights are still in effect, even on college campuses. Disruption, the report believes, can be dealt with by the university's internal disciplinary procedures, appropriately reformed, until the point at which disruption crosses the line to become illegal violence and terrorism. When this happens, the university administration must call for help—either the local constabulary or the National Guard, depending on the degree to which the situation has escalated. Well and good, but having given the summary that I claimed was unnecessary, I believe I can reiterate my point: this is merely the conventional wisdom of protest and confrontation. That we have reached a state in these United States where such distinctions have to be carefully pointed out to responsible public men is shameful indeed. That the commission thought it needed to do so is the truly noteworthy fact, rather than the pedestrian content of the distinctions themselves.

There is a good deal more detail in the report which finds no appropriate summary in this discussion. The commission thinks that there ought to be stricter laws governing the availability of explosives. They think it irresponsible to allow nervous young National Guardsmen to carry shoulder weapons loaded with live ammunition onto the campuses. They think it would be a good thing if the President kept himself well-informed of the views of students and blacks. They think that, instead of being punitively reduced, federal support for universities—including black universities—ought to be increased. They

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think that universities ought to be prepared for disruption, rather than to improvise their response when the troubles are already upon them. They have doubts about the wisdom of continuing the old pattern of ROTC on the campuses. They want university professors to pay more attention to their teaching and non-military research and to pay less attention to the lush opportunities for well-remunerated "service" off the campus. And of course this commission thinks there should be more meetings and more commissions. There may be a few more recommendations that for the moment have escaped my recollection. No matter. The commission plainly thinks that enlightened common sense has been fairly scarce in some of the immediate responses that administrators and students have made when they come together in untraditional ways, in an atmosphere of jittery crisis, on the campus. So they advocate some rather unexciting remedies. Aside from the fact that this sort of thing garners no headlines, and hence little real attention, it must also be noted that all these recommendations speak mainly to one side of the two-pronged crisis that the report outlines in its introductory headpiece.

The other side of the matter is the "crisis of understanding." The report itself judges that this is the deeper and more essential component of the troubles we face and it is to this side of the complex of causes for unrest that I now turn.

The report claims: "This shift in the student culture is a basic—perhaps *the* basic— contributing cause of student unrest." We will come to the nature of the new student culture and its relation to the crisis of understanding almost immediately. It must first be said that the problem of violence and its control, though shockingly real and important, is but a symptom of the deeper crisis rather than something independent that can be made to disappear by more efficient or more stringent police methods. The reader should note that the distinction I have adopted from the report is, however, usually regarded by politicians and hardhats as precisely the kind of ninnyhammer softheadedness that is very largely responsible for the sea of troubles in which we find ourselves. While I cannot, of course, agree, the reader of the Scranton Report must always bear in mind that the report, for a public document, is breaking new ground in its underlining of the "crisis of understanding." Most politicians wouldn't dare to say as much as clearly as the commission says on this matter.

Chapter Two of the report is, in my opinion, the most important of the expository sections of the document. It is in Chapter Two that the commission attempts to provide the explanation to go along with its assertion in the headpiece that the crisis in understanding is the root cause of the crisis of violence. There is, we are told—if we need to be—a "new" youth culture abroad in this land. And while there are the expected deviations in the depth of the commitment that the youth exhibit, all of whom may look equally freaky to the suburban mortgage-holder, still there are the emerging essentials of a common creed that, the commission says, sometimes takes on a quasi-religious cast. I can do no better than to quote the report's admirable summary of this new culture:

> At the center . . . is a romantic celebration of human life, of the unencumbered individual, of the senses, and of nature. It rejects what it sees to be the operational ideals of American society; materialism, competition, rationalism, technology, consumerism, and militarism. This emerging culture is the deeper cause of student protest against war, racial injustice, and the abuses of the multiversity.

If, just for the moment, we put aside the question of the variety of means by which the youth in question attempt to bring the larger society to recognize these ideals, the reader who fancies himself a liberal may be rather numbed by the extent to which his own secular faith coincides with that attributed to the young freaks. The centrality of human life is not the private possession of campus idealists and innocent romantics. It is a proud achievement, or at least a stated ideal, of western civilization itself. We who pay taxes to kill the Vietnamese and to destroy their crops and foliage, who perhaps are deforming the next few generations of their children, cannot afford, morally, to turn a deaf ear to such an emphasis on humanity—of whatever nation—merely because we execrate violence. Indeed, though the report does not mention it, our righteous opposition to violence is suspectly selective. Police violence or military violence hardly upsets most of us to the same extent that student violence does. The overseas violence of the nation to which we are all a contributing part does not dismay us nearly so much as the wanton destruction of urban or university property.

It is not difficult to analyze some of the noisy rhetoric and actual counterviolence against the many varieties of campus protestors and disrupters as a half-unconscious guilty scapegoating of the visible minority who stridently challenge our own split consciences. Could it be that we justify the killing of "communists" by depriving them of their humanity with the hated label, just as some of us justify the killing of "radical students" by depriving them of their humanity by inventing a hated label that is beginning to have something of the blind hatred attached to it that "communist" has had in past? If this is not so, can we then give a rationale that is genuinely rational and true to the mainstream ethic of western civilization for the war in Vietnam? To say that "we" are, or the President is, "ending" it is hardly sufficient. Can we credibly rebut the charge of institutional racism? Can we examine the youth culture's criticism of the universities and give those institutions a clean bill of health? If we cannot—and I, for one, cannot—then the students' rejection of "reason" itself is understandable, even while we cannot and should not forgive or tolerate the violence of criminal terrorists. If we cannot, like Macbeth, wash away the bloody stains on the hands of our country with reasons but only with *raisons d'état*, then we need to harken to what the young are saying. To claim that permissive child-raising or insufficient firmness on the part of parents, judges, and university administrators can

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account for this feeling on the part of the young is plain humbug. Influential he may be, but Dr. Spock is no Zoroastrian Ahriman. What it does seem to signify, and this is a hopeful sign, is that our faltering educational system and we who are our youth's elders have somehow managed to instill a conscience in the young which we ourselves, steeped in busyness and important affairs, have mostly managed to outgrow.

While seeming to recognize that the "new youth culture" strikes some authentic notes, the commission nevertheless has included criticism of the occasionally ugly means by which these young idealists go about the business of trying to produce change in the establishment, be it governmental or universitarian. The youth extol participatory democracy on the one hand and with the other practice something dangerously near to elitism or protofascism. Like their adult critics, they are impatient and enamored of quick and simplistic solutions to immensely complicated problems with a long history of development back of them. And, again like their older attackers, they have a penchant, some of them, for nostalgically turning back the clock and opting for a retrograde world which celebrates a "whole earth" inhabited by coöperative noble savages. The scene is one reminiscent of Dante's unforgettable picture of the misers butting the wasters as the circle of punishment turns upon itself. In our own day the differences between the radical left and the radical right converge in the same implicit totalitarianism that threatens what remains of our democracy.

But when we turn back to the beginning of the report, and note the recommendations that the commission offers to students, we are struck by some puzzling anomalies. Feeling as they do—and with some legitimacy—what should the students do?

Here are the commission's answers. Students should become more tolerant of those who differ with them. They should cease heckling speakers. The students who are themselves unwilling to move far enough toward the violent end of the spectrum actually to perpetrate violent acts should not aid criminal malefactors by remaining silent. They should use more conventional, hopefully more persuasive, language and abjure the four-letter combinations that uptight the establishment. And, finally, they should work patiently within the guidelines of political action typical of the majority establishment that they wish to challenge.

While I have no personal quarrel with any of the trite—in the sense of pedestrian—conventional wisdom offered in these recommendations to the students, it is remarkable to me that the commission did not put two and two together from the materials to be found in their own report. For, given the thrust of the "new youth culture," to follow the recommendations that the commission makes is to give up the fight. The intolerance, the elitist stench, the "bad" words, and at last, even the turn to anarchistic terror, are all means adopted in desperation. They are means adopted after countless students were gaily given the bureaucratic run-around by university administrations and by political parties and candidates. They are means that revolutionists since revolutions began have used, after exhausting all the standard alternatives, to gain their ends or to martyr themselves in the attempt. It is precisely because the normal and ordinary channels of bureaucracy have been unresponsive that some students have turned to the kinds of tactics that the black sit-ins in the south successfully pioneered in the sixties, and have adapted them to the most vulnerable point in what they perceive as an interlocking directorate of establishments—the university. They *know* they're using non-normal methods that serious-minded adult intellectuals disapprove of. Like, man, that's the point. Student government, for example, has been around for a long time and the *ancien régime* student government types were short-haired, sport-coated and tied, and they rarely caused their elders in the university any trouble. Indeed, far from being troublesome, student government was a very handy thing to have around since the administration could always point to the paper powers of students as evidence that the university community was one big happy democratic mix. The student "leaders" used no four-letter words, they occupied no buildings, and the majority of the students whom they were supposed to be representing paid them no attention whatever. They knew it to be a sham and they were perceptive enough to be apathetic. The student leaders were professionals; they knew their place, and the university bureaucracy went right on building graduate empires while indentured servants called "teaching assistants" dealt with the masses of undergraduates. Faculty members, meanwhile, assiduously cultivated the opportunities for ready cash available to them as off-campus experts. As the commission well knows, circumstances like those described were not, in themselves, enough to bring us to crisis. The war and racism, plus some other failings of the universities as perceived by students, underlie the turn to nonestablishmentarian methods—but I have probably said enough to bring forward the point I wish to make.

That point is simply that the commission failed to correlate its quite apt description of the state of mind of some university youth that they dubbed the "new" youth culture with their recommendations for that culture's behavior in future.

The "new" youth culture, while echoing warmed-over slogans traceable to some of the pioneer figures in the history of the ideas of individualism and social change, and while seeming to conservatively move back toward the rural commune and a Luddite counterculture, has managed to challenge the very basis of rationalism itself. By "rationalism" I mean to summon up the whole encrusted cultural inheritance that implies progress, science and technology, military success counted out in dead bodies, computerized impersonality, and giganticism in general. Those who, like the commission, argue as reasonable men conventionally argue, seem almost bound to miss a central implication of their own findings. The contest between the young and the old, this time, is not

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merely a contemporary replay of the perennial intergenerational war. It is the assertion of the claim of humanity and individualism ("romanticism," if you please) against the dehumanized rationalism that the young (and some not-so-young) see as the engine of destruction of distinctively human values. And if the reasonable rationalism of the report's approach is not a self-corrective force against the irrational rationalism that is linked to war, racism, and bureaucratic privilege, then what "recommendations" could possibly be of real influence in easing the polarization and moving toward the reconciliation that the report desires to advance?

I would not be misunderstood. I have not argued, nor has the report, that each and every campus radical is imbued with a fancy philosophical rationale that is the product of profound reflection. Nor have I argued, nor does the report argue, that simply because there is an aspect of the "new" youth culture that seriously challenges the adult, "rational" establishment, that the rest of us ought to vacate whatever knowledge and authority we may genuinely possess and serve youth in its own terms. Least of all have I argued, nor has the report argued, that the campus should be a privileged sanctuary for unlawful behavior that is intolerable on the outside. I have tried to make one major point only, and perhaps it deserves restatement: if those who hold the power will not listen and will not change, then is it enough merely to give reasonable advice? I do not invite the specter of revolution as the alternative to reason, for, like the good establishment liberal that I am, I am convinced that anarchy and revolution bring with them the practical certainty of even greater violence—and ultimately the loss to a rightist reaction of the partly spoiled freedom we have. In spite of the relative calm and apparent "normalcy" of most campuses at this writing, it still seems to me that the situation has not changed much in its essentials after the flighty uproars of last May.

We have yet to mention what the Scranton Report calls the most important of all its recommendations. Though it does not say so, I suspect that it would not be out of the spirit of the report to suggest that this major recommendation might stand as the commission's answer to the hiatus this review calls attention to—between the romantic moralism of the new student culture and the rationalism of the report (which latter, like it or not, is a microcosm of the "rationalistic" macrocosm as perceived by the students). Because of its central importance, then, I think this recommendation deserves quotation:

> . . . The most important aspect of the overall effort to prevent further campus disorder—indeed, the most important of all the commission's recommendations—rests with the President. As the leader of all Americans only the President can offer the compassionate, reconciling moral leadership that can bring the country together again. Only the President has the platform and prestige to urge all Americans, at once, to step back from the battle lines into which they are forming. Only the President, by example and by instruction, can effectively calm the rhetoric of both public officials and protestors whose words in the past have too often helped further divide the country, rather than reunite it.

To recapitulate. If the crisis of violence cannot be analyzed and corrected in its own terms and if the symptom of violence is tied to the crisis of understanding, then the commission seems to me to have proposed a rather desperately unlikely solution.

By recommending that the President of the United States exercise the healing ministry of reconciling the polarization that threatens to dismember the nation in civil war, the report adopts the leadership principle, betting all its chips on a single man's teaching a democratic nation how to pull itself together by purveying to it the causes of its malaise. And this assumes that the President is capable of listening to the kind of advice that Raphael Hythloday so plausibly claimed the King of France would regard as impractical foolishness, not fit to be treated with seriousness when important matters of state are at stake. Reliance on the leadership principle would be more plausible in a world where Adlai Stevenson could be elected president, or in a world where John Kennedy would not have been assassinated. It is at least conceivable that these men might have listened to the conventional wisdom of the liberal intellectuals and, with the help of a glamorous personal *charisma*, managed to heal the scarred factions that we call a nation. They might have done what was necessary to reduce the crisis of understanding to manageable proportions. As the commission says, protest is not the problem. To use power to squelch protest would be to desert democracy and to sacrifice the liberal tradition of natural rights on which this nation is founded. Just as important, we need protest in order to effect radical change without destroying ourselves in the throes of revolutionary change led by desperate martyrs who have long since despaired of grafting together conventional political power and the humanistic ethic. Roosevelt, after all, did listen to his brain trust and unified a nation that was threatened with something like a revolution during the depression of the thirties. Can we reasonably hope that presidential leadership might prove the key to reconciliation now as it did almost 40 years ago?

The answer, from this reviewer's perspective, is resoundingly negative. I began writing this piece while the President's advisers were allowing a few egg-throwers and sign carriers to disrupt—just a little—the President's speeches in order to give his law-and-order spiel a target and to build him a sympathetic *ethos*. As I finish, I have before me the text of the President's speech at Phoenix in which he proposes to calm down the nation with a "new" toughness toward the violent "thugs" who bomb and destroy. Here is not the place to try to unravel the President's motives or to analyze his strategy. But it is necessary to suggest that the President is operating in a world where the Scranton Report's recommendations

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to him are as irrelevant as the rational humanism of More's *Utopia* was to the Machiavellian monarchs of that day. What we have learned in the interim comes down, in pragmatic political terms, to a fat zero. The real political advisers are not men of wisdom. They are strategists who tell the President how to play off one faction against the other with a view to getting him, or those sympathetic to him, elected. They do not apparently know or care how to govern the country. They are experts in the art of manipulation of opinion and not in wisdom. Their text is Machiavelli, not More. And the President listens.

This review itself is a symptom of the derangement of the United States of America today. It, like the piece it reviews, begins with an antique perennial problem of how to unite power and wisdom just as Plato pondered the problem of how to make kings into philosophers. Instead of sticking to the problem of campus unrest, it ends hung up on the problem of the personality of a particular president, and it leaves unanswered the problem of trying to get men of power to listen to men of wisdom.

If the ultimate conclusion is not to be merely a cynical acceptance of the eternal and unbridgeable character of the divide between wisdom and power, it can only be hoped that, soon, some commission will address itself to the problem of implementing reason short of encouraging revolution by the power tactics either of the right or the left, the young or the old.

I recommend to the President some wisdom even more ancient than More's: "The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools. Wisdom is better than the weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good." (Ecclesiastes 9:17-18) This is admirable advice, but I do not know—any more than the authors of the Scranton Report—how it could be implemented.

Is it possible that the last word on the matter was said almost half a thousand years ago when Raphael Hythloday and More agreed that "there's no room at court for philosophy"?

VICTOR M. DEPTA

DRAGONFLY

Hey who turned off the lights and the record player
and the sun doing the fonky chicken in the leaves
of the branches and the water?

If you didn't know the brain was working in that slouched
figure sitting on the creek bank you'd think it was
a dead body.

But his brain is working sending down roots and budding
another dilemma about his wife and kid he can't
make it any more but has to get up and go back to
the house with brown minnows darting among the
bean sprouts in his chest anyway.

What's that dragonfly with a purple sheen and blurred
wings doing? hovering above the water and dipping
its tail in and moving on about five feet and doing
it again and moving on and doing it again
is it cooling off its ass? is it laying eggs?

The body fell flat on his back in the creek laughing he
looked at the sky it was his grandmother ironing
a blue dress.

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# of W. S. Merwin: "Haven't we found our leader?"

Gail Godwin

HEALING FRAGMENTS

The Miner's Pale Children, by W. S. Merwin. Atheneum. $6.50.

I knew an art teacher who made new students draw the space around a chair. You get the chair, but with volatile, slightly eerie dimensions. One must get a new fix on things, he said. Drawing the space around the chair was a first exercise in the lifetime task of training vision.

Merwin's first collection of prose pieces numbers eighty-seven such exercises. They are about the spaces which surround our securities. They resound with emptinesses we have been stepping over all our lives. Prophetic intrusions in the forms of animals, vegetables, minerals, accost us. Landscapes bear the tracks of trespassers from both sides. Reading through the book, you may feel your imagination ache uncomfortably as it stretches to accommodate unfamiliar percepts.

Things come to you on their terms, which can be disconcerting when those terms turn out to be yours. "Ends" tells how certain shoelaces conduct themselves at the moment of breakage. The less substantial ones "fling themselves into the air waving and disporting themselves." Others go so far as to flap and dance as though they were now the ends of whole laces. But the better laces respond to the occasion in silence, often not moving at first. These nobler laces feel despondent and empty rather than exhilarated when the break comes. They reflect "the fact that with the loss of their use (for they are no longer laces—that self has gone) they have become something different, and have not yet discovered what it is." Keenly aware of their fragmentary state, bewailing their lost usefulness to something larger than themselves, they see nothing ahead of them but dissolution. "Given a new self, they respond by feeling deprived of the possibility of ever having a self at all." And so they go on clinging to the need to be useful as "very slowly and reluctantly they are drawn toward the holes and disappear around the first bends of their journeys."

A man named Tergvinder ("Tergvinder's Stone") brings a large round boulder into his living room. His dog and cat pee on it, his wife trips over it, but Tergvinder says there is nothing to be done about it. Before the stone, Tergvinder often woke in the night troubled by the ills of the world and went naked into the dark living room where he heard mournful breathing coming from a hole in the middle. "It was a sound, Tergvinder said, that touched him with fellow-feeling, and he had undertaken—oh, without saying anything to anybody—to assuage, if he could, that wordless longing that seemed always on the verge of despair." For months Tergvinder circles the problem. Then he finds the stone which has been at the foot of his driveway the whole time. It fits the hole perfectly. Now Tergvinder's night-walks bring peace. Often he kneels beside the stone and they converse silently for hours.

Things: mute with eloquent reproach, or fellow-feelers of our own condition: the life that goes on inside clothing drawers; postcards, the latest arriving this morning, from the Maginot Line; a medal of disapproval; a garden in which an unexploded time-bomb lies buried; a set of train tracks that move slowly towards the cliff; knives shining gently on the wall "in a world upon which they open no eyes at all, about which they know nothing, and of whose savageries they have become a symbol."

Stalking the fictions are animals, sometimes friendly, sometimes sinister, often ambiguous in their offers of help. There is "The Animal Who Eats Numbers," for instance. ("Two is a little girl in a starched muslin dress . . . Three is a bigger boy without much to say for himself . . . Four is eaten a lot . . . Six is Two's older sister . . . Seven is a quiet man in old clothes . . .") Some of the numbers like being eaten, others don't mention it, to One it makes no difference one way or the other, Five had rather get eaten than do homework. The animal never eats any number for long "and almost never if they are doing something. Besides, there are just as many of them as there

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ever were, and everyone says the future is theirs. It's the animal who is disappearing."

More disturbing is the inscrutable pale animal with eyes like holes who visits the troubled king in "The Fountain." The animal seems to know this updated Pharaoh/Fisher-King with his penchant for self-analysis better than the king knows himself. After giving the king what he says he wants (water) three times, the animal gives him what he really wants, though it loses its own head in the process. Both, however, die to a new life. This is one of the most resonant pieces in the collection. The grave beauty of an old fairy tale is charged with new life, its formalities broken open and revitalized in the same way the creature breaks and renews the king.

There are other animals: the eland, the cave bear and the mammoth who run alongside you as you flee from Mogog who is sowing the earth with days of glass; the sky beetle, that blithe spirit who burrows back into the sky every morning and sings to the stars of a heaven they'll never see: the earth in daylight; the moles who make little models of our graves beside our graves ("Is this dust yours, they say?"); "Spiders I Have Known"; and a camel-moth who gets through the eye of a needle with plenty of room to spare.

People go on strange journeys and return transformed. All his life, a man has been fascinated by the view of the roofs of the village on the other side of the woods. Of course it is forbidden to go there and of course, being a dreamer, he goes. And finds . . . just roofs. He goes back to his own village, but from that day forward the top of it eludes him. ("Members of my own family climb stairs and vanish, head first, step-by-step, and I want to call, but what could I call?")

A group of middle-aged men are herded by white-smocked attendants into a locker room with frosted glass windows and told to disrobe. As they comply, some mutter, others say prayers. What is going to happen to them? ("This time no one told us anything. We do not even know where the battle was, on which our fates depended.") When the men have stripped down in front of one another ("Some of us must have had no exercise for years . . . Some of us obviously have revealed our birthday suits only to the bought bulbs of bathrooms, for years.") the attendant tells them, "As you were. Get dressed." The men put on their clothes again, several fainting from relief. But the clothes are too tight, they have grown old, "as though they'd been hanging there since we were children." There are clasp knives and pieces of paper in the pockets "which we remember but about which we say nothing." The men are released ("—yes, released —one by one and allowed to walk away in silence, past the new windows").

Sooner or later, any laconic fiction with existential tones will be called "Kafka-esque." On the whole, these pieces by Merwin lack the relentlessness of Kafka, but certain of them do invite comparison. Read together, Merwin's "The Death-defying Tortonis" and Kafka's "A Hunger Artist" enlarge each other. The Tortonis are a high-wire cycling act. The narrating Tortoni describes his troupe's death-defying act with analytical detachment. ("I roll the front wheel onto the wire eighty feet above the ground . . . I feel the feet in their tights, on my shoulders. I feel the muscles in the arches of the feet contract a little.") The dimensions of the wire are given. ("It is in fact a metal cable of about the diameter of an ordinary candle, enveloped over its whole length by a layer of soft rubber between an eighth and a quarter of an inch in thickness.") The special properties of the bicycles are enumerated. ("It seems hardly necessary to point out that they are not ordinary bicycles.") The narrator then offers brief and dispassionate biographical sketches of each member of the troupe. ("Rafael married Marisa two years ago, after living with her for three. He is much slighter than Claudio, blond, quicker but more nervous. He worries about money . . . On Rafael's shoulders are Emilia's feet, Emilia lives with Claudio.")

Both the Tortonis' act and the hunger artist's act are losing their audience. In one sense, the hunger artist is glad when they forget about him for a time because it enables him to fast as long as he likes rather than being forced to stop after forty days. For the hunger artist, fasting is "the easiest thing in the world"; not like the Tortonis ("Everyone's role, as may be imagined, is difficult. But for the cyclists it is more difficult than for anyone, and our training began almost as soon as we could walk.") When the emaciated hunger artist is finally discovered in his straw and pulled from his cage, he reveals with his dying breath that he had no choice but to fast since he had never found any food he liked. The Tortonis have come to their art not from such inner necessity but with almost Pavlovian training. The children practiced on an old wire laid on the ground with a painted canvas of spectators beneath. Their real performance is the same thing to them: just another old wire with a painted canvas beneath.

At the end of the story, the narrator tells how Grandfather Tortoni blames the decline of interest on the troupe rather than on the audience. "He says we are no longer of interest because in fact we are not defying anything real at all. According to him we know too much and it is all a game. Even if we were killed we would be killed in a game." The old man reserves his admiration for a performer who, just once, "combined risk and wit and performed on the wire, at the age of eighteen, on a unicycle, on his head." The grandfather also remembers with secret pride how he himself once drove an ordinary bicycle—without special tires or anything—across a city square, a hundred feet up, without rehearsal, simple because "It got into him that he could." He tells the young Tortonis they should turn to something they know nothing about if they are going to talk about defying death. "The whole matter, he says, is far simpler than we have made it. It consists of nothing but

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being able to look straight ahead and see that there could not possibly be any other way." The grandfather, of the same generation now as Kafka's hunger artist, belongs to that inspired troupe who perform not because they can but because they must. Because 'it gets into them,' because 'there could not possibly be any other way.'

* * *

We self-consciously describe ourselves as an age without a myth. Since Tennyson, it is no longer possible for us to debate all night with our death angel and then have it all set right in the morning by looking out our window and seeing a happy family on their way to church. Our Sunday mornings, as Wallace Stevens knew, aside from a few encroachments of the old catastrophe, that myth that held up pretty well for nineteen-hundred years, a r e very much days like any other, days of wide water, without sound. New myths cannot be manufactured out of whole cloth, even by DuPont, but our better poets, like Grandfather Tortoni's heroes, continue to stitch towards something because "there could not possibly be any other way," and/or because they simply can't tolerate the present menu.

Merwin has not given us a new myth, but his visionary exercises provide fragments of one. Like the bandage in the story by that name (about a bandage which moves to a different part of your anatomy every day, restoring one broken part after another) these fictions wrap themselves around the parts "you will have to try to use again as soon as you can, just as you did before. The thought appalls you. The broken, appalled by thoughts of the whole."

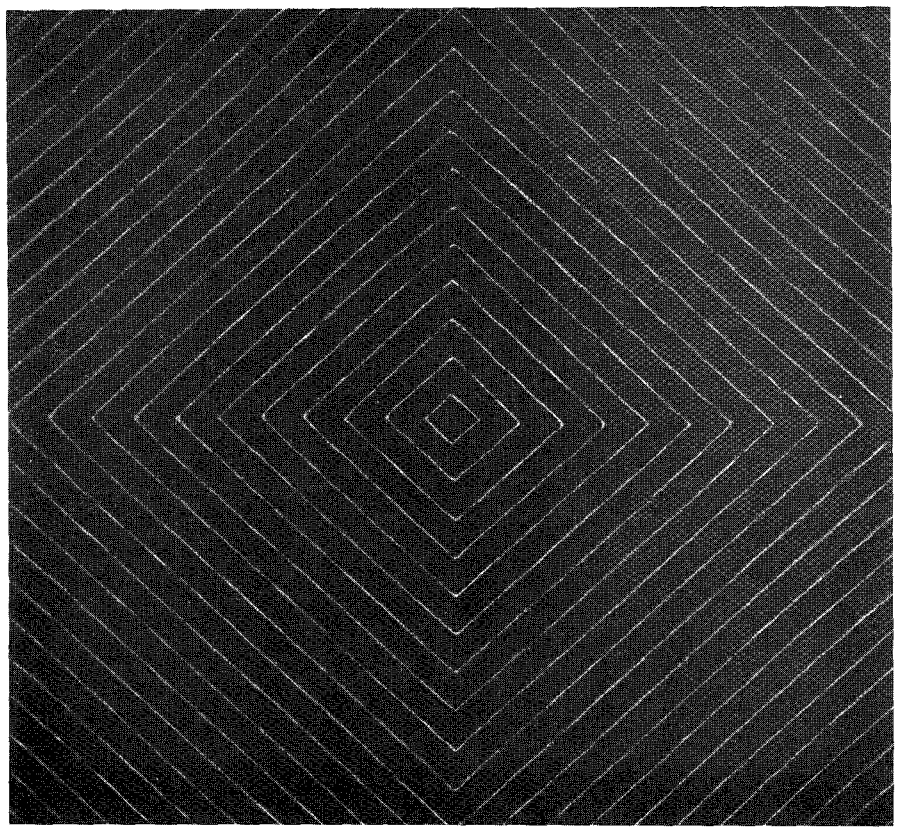
In the next to last piece, entitled "Fragments" (the last is called, prophetically, "Dawn Comes to its Mountains in the Brain"), the tale teller explains how he found a hand lying on the table one day. "It offered no explanation. Well, a hand does not offer explanations." He decides to watch the hand, sure that it knows something. His assumptions about t h e nature of knowledge change as he watches. He begins to see that the hand is not still. "For I had thought at first, in my self-centered way, that the hand was motionless whereas I, by contrast, was moving. Now it seemed to me that I was standing as a single spot in a progression too vast for me to even imagine more than a section of it, a progression which represented the story of the hand, the destiny in whose service the hand had come to decision after decision, millions of years before I had been heard of, in order to lie, for however long, where it now lay, in its present form." Finally the hand goes away. It is replaced by an ear. Then an ankle. A hair. A tongue. At this point the teller inserts the St. Matthew version of the loaves and fishes. "And when everyone had eaten his fill the fragments were gathered up and they filled twelve baskets."

"I mention this," says the narrator, "because when I found the tongue it came to me for the first time that the miracle was not the matter of quantity but the fact that the event had never left the present. Parts of it keep appearing. I have begun to have glimpses of what I am doing, crossing the place where they have all been satisfied, and still finding fragment after fragment."

When Merwin's pieces do attain the propitious crossings referred to above, they are truly illuminating. The ones which do not might be described as worknotes towards vision, or, in keeping with his wisely subtle title, "diggings." There is no piece in the volume entitled "The Miner's Pale Children," and therefore it seems safe to say that Merwin meant this title to represent the collection as a whole and to contain its weaknesses and its strengths. Those pale children are the living, yet always slightly hungry, progeny of one who has committed himself to work ever below the surface of things, chipping away at the blackness. His labors are hauled up to us piecemeal, to be burnt gratefully in the absence of light.

It has taken me this long
To know what I cannot say
Where it begins
Like the names of the hungry

(From "The Piper" in *The Carrier of Ladders*)



FRANK STELLA
"Jill" (1969)
Collection: Albright/Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo

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Peter Cooley

TRANSFIGURING THE WORD

The Carrier of Ladders, by W. S. Merwin. Atheneum. $3.95.

When a poet reaches mastery of an idiom, he can achieve his poems with the appearance of effortlessness. This is where W. S. Merwin's latest book has taken him. Half again as long as *The Lice* and following it only three years later, *The Carrier of Ladders* is the perfection of that technique Merwin instituted in *The Moving Target.*

In the majority of *Moving Target's* poems there is the effort to empty the poem of discursive content even as lines play with prose rhythms and remnants of prose logic.

> With open arms the water runs
> in to the wheel.
>
> I come back to where I have
> never been.
> You arrive to join me.
> We have the date in our hands.
> ("To Where We Are")

As in so much of our recent poetry, the progress of these poems is a shoring among the ruins of belief for an attempt at private perception. But in *Moving* the images come at the speaker as epiphanies absorbed into rapid movement which often capsulizes in a definite statement or question, even if sardonic:

> Departures . . .
> Saying perennially
> Here it is, the one and only,
> The beginning and the end.
> This time the dials have come
> with the hands and
> Suddenly I was never here before.
> Oh dust, oh dust, progress
> Is being made.

The "surreal" images, in fact, were frequently constructed around some form of a possessive: this "tic" expressed the speaker's desire to combine the disparate even as the construction keeps objects apart: "The girls at last the hips full of dice the names"; "Tears of the candles veins full of feathers/Knees in salt/I the bell's only son."

Even in the parables and litanies of *Moving* there was a pretended casualness and wit which characterized American poetry in the late '50s and early '60s: "Friend Reductio,/ Would you have known delight/If it had knocked you down?"; "Oh hell, there once again hunger/Gets up in the middle of a meal and without/A word departs."

The Lice was an altogether starker, more perfect volume. Post-Symbolist in concerns and Post-Surrealist in technique, the poems usually employed a new lining where each line in a stanza had its own integrity, yet enjambed with the next. In "The Child":

> At times night occurs to me so
> that I think I have been
> Struck from behind I remain
> perfectly
> Still feigning death listening for
> the
> Assailant perhaps at last
> I even sleep a little for later I
> have moved . . .

Combined with other elements, this lining eliminated the "fancy" present in *The Moving Target.* Grammatical connections, for example, while more disjunctive, were bound together by more striking individual images. These images were so constantly reiterated that they seemed runes for the speaker's— and reader's— deciphering among the mutabilities of an abstracted reality:

> The clock strikes one one one
> Through the window in a line
> pass
>
> The bees whose flower is death
>
> Why the morning smelled of
> honey
>
> Already how long it is since the
> harvest
> The dead animal fallen all the
> same way
>
> On the stroke the wheels recall
> That they are water
> An empty window has overtaken
> me
>
> After the bees comes the smell
> of cigars
> In the lobby of darkness
> ("News of the Assassin")

Narrative is over now; what wit there is, is imagistic ("And that my words are the garment of what I shall never be/Like the tucked up sleeve of a one-armed boy") and a new prophetic strain is apparent, coupled with criticism of the sanguine Western humanist moral position:

> What is man that he should be
> infinite
> The music of a deaf planet
> The one note
> Continues clearly this is
>
> The other world
> These strewn rocks belong to the
> wind
> If it could use them
> ("The Gods")
>
> We are the echo of the future
> On the door it says what to do
> to survive
> But we were not born to survive
> Only to live
> ("The River of Bees")
>
> Tonight once more
> I find a single prayer and it is
> not for men
> ("December Night")

As in other American poetry of the late '60s there was a new, manifest political focus. In Merwin this often took the shape of fable, a type he had early mastered but now presented in more abbreviated form in such poems as "News of the Assassin" or "Caesar," "My Brothers the Silent" or "The Asians Dying." Though not in that form, "When the War Is

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Over" expresses a political attitude which leads to *The Carrier of Ladders*:

> When the war is over
> We will be proud of course the air will be
> Good for breathing at last
> The water will have been improved the salmon
> And the silence of heaven will migrate more perfectly
> The dead will think the living are worth it we will know
> Who we are
> And we will all enlist again

Though in reading individual *Carrier* poems it may seem the Apocalypse is over, the book as a whole weaves in and out of the event: history is now discontinuously continuous. Our agony is not that we move toward an end with awareness, but that we are constantly re-experiencing a final moment:

> what is it
> they say can turn even this into wisdom
> and what is wisdom if it is not now
> in the loss that has not left this place
>
> oh if we knew
> if we knew what we needed if we even knew
> the stars would look to us to guide them
> ("The Different Stars")

Taken as a whole, however, the book progresses thematically toward the silence— no Eliotic still point— of this, one of the last poems.

> By the time you read this
>
> it is dark on the next page
>
> the mourners sleep there
> feeling their feet in the tide . . .
>
> the address of the last house
> that we will sleep in together on earth
> will have been paid as a price
> dialled on a telephone
> worn as identification
> ("Letter")

The integrity of the line as independent yet enjambing unit has been lost, but at the gain of more variety in tone and form. Not only are there prayers as in *Lice;* new, more indirect allegories are present as in "The Removal" or "The Piper" even as Merwin takes on such a standard thing as "The Judgment of Paris" and does it his own way. There are several litanies and many litanyesque poems. In contrast with the "Caesar" of *Lice*, *Carrier's* counterpart, "Pilate," is a tunnel of identities and actions incarnated in the poem's conduct:

> It has
> a life of its own however long it
> served Pharaoh and so a heaven of its
> own to which its own blood calls which should be
> heard with respect when they call crucify
> crucify him of its own why should you
> not unless it is walking arm
> in arm with objects which you think you can see

Probably the most ambitious works are the four psalms, each in a different form, interspersed among other poems in the last third of the book. In these Merwin reaches his height as a mystic poet rivalling late Eliot in sheer mastery of language but lacking the orthodoxy for which his predecessor sometimes found no adequate "objective correlative" in *Four Quartets.*

Like every great poet Merwin has increasingly surrendered himself to his obsessions, both ideational and imagistic. If he were not in his early 40s, one would be tempted to compare his present hierophantic stance with that of late Eliot, Yeats, or Stevens. Like Eliot— though certainly less so— he grew up during a period of relative poverty in American poetry. Unlike Eliot's day, the '50s were a period when poetry was not unattended by criticism but overattended by a too-rigorous cult. Like Eliot, however, Merwin turned to foreign literatures to find a new voice, an "international style." In his new book— which seems to me our most impressive volume of visionary poetry since *Lord Weary's Castle* — haven't we found again our leader in poetry? Though he declaims from his cliff at times, he is the only kind of leader for us now— the leader who also disclaims the role. "The Piper" ends:

> It has taken me till now
> to be able to say
> even this
> it has taken me this long
> to know what I cannot say
> where it begins
> like the names of the hungry
>
> Beginning
> I am here
> please
> be ready to teach me
> I am almost ready to learn

Kindergarten, by Elzbieta Ettinger. Houghton Mifflin, $5.95.

Westward to Laughter, by Colin MacInnes. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $5.95.

House of Gold, by Elizabeth Cullinan. Houghton Mifflin, $6.95.

If one cannot escape the conviction that man is oppressed, he can at least try to understand why. But perhaps it is not worth it. At least this is the conclusion one toys with after reading a series of current novels, Elzbieta Ettinger's *Kindergarten*, Colin MacInnes' *Westward to Laughter* and Elizabeth Cullinan's *House of Gold.* Each of these novels deals with man existing in an oppressed state; each unmasks, with varying degrees of success, man's inclination not only to accept conditions that thwart the expression of the individual will but also to impose such conditions.

Miss Ettinger and MacInnes convincingly re-create the particular horrors of man's monuments of human oppression: the World War II Nazi reign of terror and the eighteenth century era of West Indian slave trade. Both structure their books around the coming of age of the main characters, Elli Rostow in *Kindergarten* and Alexander Nairm in *Westward to Laughter.* Because the two are young, and the young by tra-

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dition question, one waits through their persecution and endures their corruption expecting them to come to grips with what is happening to them. They do not.

In *Kindergarten,* for instance, Elli, a Jew, is forced to masquerade as a Christian who co-operates with the State in the extermination of the Jews. She safeguards what shaky freedom she has by exposing her own race, murdering, and, in one particularly gruesome episode, helping to butcher a victim and dispose of his body in candy boxes. But none of these activities actually seem to arouse or touch her. Instead of moving Elli beyond the instinct of self-preservation and into conflict with herself, Miss Ettinger blunts what impact experience could have on the girl. In some sections, for example, she explains how Elli feels in pat, almost formulaic phrases.

> When she looked back at the past two months she had an uneasy feeling of failure. She had failed the dead, betrayed the living . . . . She was capable neither of living or dying, or giving love or accepting it. She felt she had passed the limits of damnation.

In other sections, such as at the beginning of Chapter 12, the author weakens the impact by cluttering episodes with an indiscriminate use of flashbacks, dreams and diary entries. As Elli clutches to what she can have of a brashly gay, unreflective life at the end of the book, she is no nearer to understanding why she desecrates her life and that of others than is the reader.

Alexander Nairm, a Scottish boy forced into slavery, does little better in coming to understand his actions. As he reveals himself in the memoirs he puts together while awaiting death, the young hero of *Westward to Laughter* proves capable of penetrating into the hyprocrisies of the men and institutions that had betrayed him. They had not only practiced slavery but had justified it. His response was to rebel. But his insight into his own actions lacks conscience. The fact that he is the hero of a picaresque novel militates against any extended ethical or moral analyses, but even when he occasionally does record thought rather than instinctive behavior, he only exteriorizes his guilt. When, for instance, he admits to surprise at himself for having taken pleasure in the wanton torture of captives, he depersonalizes the event.

> It is in the nature of man, even the basest, that he cannot be cruel, and keep his sanity, unless it is through such habitual familiarity that cruelty becomes but custom.

Because he is caught up in his rôle of rebel, outlaw and adventurer, Nairm is unable to explain to the reader what, if anything, distinguishes abuse of others for thrills from enslavement of Nairm for gain.

The fact that neither Elli nor Nairm understand what happens to them as human beings does not mean the authors do not evoke sympathy for them. But the fact that the two victims endure and perpetuate man's inclination to oppress others without even a psychologically purgative insight leaves the reader with the impression that adventure and painful horror have been re-created for their own sake.

Elizabeth Cullinan places her novel, *House of Gold,* within the frame of an American Irish-Catholic home during the mid-1950s. One expects a Walt Disney-like "Story of a Mother" (Chapter 9) as the Devlins gather around the deathbed of their eighty-three-year-old mother. But Miss Cullinan transcends such by making the mother an institution. Having justified her life by patterning it after the creation of a blessed family (such as the Catholic Church directed her), Mrs. Devlin had sought to instill in each of her nine children a belief in loyalty to the family and fidelity to the Church above all else. Her demand for that loyalty and fidelity, her belief in frugality and propriety, dominates and defines all their lives. By describing the religious trinkets that fill the dyed-gold curtain home and detailing actions such as Tom's looking away from his wife when he thinks he improprietously desires her, Miss Cullinan captures the values of a family dominated by mother and Church.

Like Elli and Nairm, the Devlin children accept the condition of their lives and cling to it without insight or understanding. The reader, however, is brought to an understanding of the Devlin's fixed condition because Miss Cullinan introduces the in-laws to comment on it. It is they who perceive that the dream of closeness is a reality of rivalry; it is they who see what happens to adults who are unable to move out of the world of childhood. Pride in family, the brother-in-law claims, keeps them from taking into account any set of standards but those they'd laid down for themselves, and which they in turn impose on those who became circumstantial Devlins—namely, their spouses and their children.

The vividness of Miss Cullinan's portrayal may awaken the reader to a type of dominance more subtle and pervasive than either slavery or persecution: the dominance of day-to-day myths that condition the individual to accept without question or understanding a value system from which might be justified such perversities as slavery and war. In each of the three novels, man is victimized by a system. His response, whether in accepting or escaping that system, is to infringe on the freedoms of others. Thus all three show that the cycle of human oppression remains unchanged and, apparently, unchangeable.

—*G. A. Hovet*

The Writer's World, edited by Elizabeth Janeway. McGraw-Hill. $8.95.

Journal of a Novel, by John Steinbeck. Viking. $6.50.

Literature and the Sixth Sense, by Philip Rahv. Houghton Mifflin. $10.00.

We like to see backstage, to hear the rest of the story. But we usually find two extremes there—Garbo or the early Faulkner announcing "I want to be left alone," or the sensationalist eager to tell all, and therefore suspect. Because the former only intrigues us with mystery the more, too often we have to settle for the

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exhibitionist, whether in literature, politics, or baseball. And there is no end to confession stories.

But now and then something turns up that shows us a glimpse we haven't seen of the writer's world, which is as we know the one we live in, only touched somehow with magic, a yellow brick road that leads at least to within sight of Oz. The books reviewed here give us some of that satisfaction of seeing backstage past the writer's art to where his craft is practiced. In *The Writer's World* the writers are as it were still on stage after the show, sometimes witty and merely entertaining, but now and then saying something about their world we had suspected but had not confirmed. *Journal of a Novel* shows Steinbeck inside himself before the show, struggling and delighting as the show comes into being, before any of us knows what it will be. And we expect Rahv, from the enchanted spectator's point of view, to recall in tranquility the shows he has seen and with the critic's "sixth sense" to induce what it is that makes literature more than a craft.

The Writer's World is a book of conversations, of writers talking to writers about their work. The discussions, given at The New School in New York City, come across as honest, personal talk not so much about the craft of writing as about their world, which they insist is the same as ours—the world of experience, with its social and moral demands, which the writer struggles to understand and to shape. Since these are writers talking to their peers, they are not attempting to instruct. Yet discussions of the craft are here—candid, untranslated and uncondescending and perhaps more accurate: Heller, for example, on beginning a novel, or historians on the kind of research each finds most valuable.

Yet the thrust of the talk is that the world of art and the world of events are one, the writer's world—an idea revived in the sixties, current for the seventies. Attitudes change: for a time in this century, the New Humanists trumpeted the moral and social responsibilities of art. Thus we had anthologies with titles such as *Literature and Life*. Rebelling against that school's excesses, which made literature merely the handmaiden of morality (and against Freudian and Marxist criticism, which made it the handmaiden of psychology and politics), the New Critics seemingly sued for divorce, declaring art a free and independent world. Vietnam and so forth have made several generations of us rebel against the aesthete excesses of the New Criticism to unite art with the world of events once again (neither the best literature nor the best criticism had actually split the world of art and events—witness Joseph Heller, for instance, and Robert Penn Warren, both participants in *The Writer's World)*. What the writers in this book tell us—from statesmen, historians, novelists, to poets—is that the two worlds are not, cannot, ought not exist apart. Art for art's sake, for the time at least, is and ought to be a thing of the past.

For they are too troubled with the ring of the absurd they hear in modern life. Wallace Markfield, for example, wonders how a novelist can compete with the bizarre stories of crime one reads even on page four of the newspaper. Likewise, the historians complain over the element of unpredictable, inexplicable chance in great historical events, which makes it so hard to learn from history, even though they feel compelled to try. But though life as we now live it may feel more absurd to us than it was in the past, Heller insists that life was no less horrible and grotesque then, yet writers still struggled and made sense of it, as they are called on to do today.

Steinbeck's *Journal of a Novel* foreshadows what Heller says. A writer's task is to explain man to himself, Steinbeck says. For even "true things quite often do not sound true unless they are made to." Yet just a clinical explanation is not enough, Steinbeck (like the others) insists. Echoing Faulkner's Nobel Prize address a year earlier, Steinbeck says there is one purpose in writing "beyond simply doing it interestingly. It is the duty of the writer to lift up, to extend, to encourage." Because of this burden, he tells his editor, "I shall welcome criticism of method or technique but . . . the morals, ideas, philosophies are my own and are not offered for correction or revision." Literature, burning thus sincerely, emotionally persuading us, is of course dangerous, as Rahv points out in *Literature and the Sixth Sense:* "Few can resist the temptation to swallow a doctrine implicit in a body of poetry that gratifies the aesthetic sense; most cannot bear to admit to themselves that the relation between literature and truth or moral insight is sometimes very erratic, if not altogether deceptive."

In *The Writer's World* the liveliest chapters are "Fiction: the Personal Dimension," in which Heller, Wallace Markfield, and Louis Auchincloss square off with Dwight Macdonald over the form and content of fiction, and the chapter in which Robert Penn Warren, William Styron, and Dr. Robert Coles thrash out the uses of "Violence in Literature."

What they all say might well be summed up by Bel Kaufman's remark that she wrote *Up the Down Staircase* without any conscious awareness of social commitment, since in literature "social commitment is implicit in the reality of the characters." Or as Joseph Barnes says, if a writer has to *ask* about commitment, he shouldn't worry about it. But commitment, they insist, doesn't mean harangue or dogma or propaganda, but humanism. According to Jerome Weidman the trouble with some modern plays may be that "instead of dealing with human beings, instead of dealing with character, instead of dealing with pieces of life that all of us can share, they are trying to deal with the atom bomb."

Again and again they talk about the freaks of life, the accidents of history, the anonymous, anarchic type of murder stalking the cities—as Styron says, "We're all theoretical victims and we're scared." These writers believe that a poem should mean, and not merely be. They reiterate a thrust toward truth and order, which in the writer's world may be synonymous with the urge

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to live. Writers, they say, must "make some sense" of the grotesque apparent accidents of life. "The mere recording of an absolute, anonymous violence," Warren concludes, "is not enough." "Sometimes in a man or a woman," Steinbeck agrees in his *Journal*, "awareness takes place . . . but locked in wordlessness. The craft or art of writing is the clumsy attempt to find symbols for the wordlessness." In this vein he pans *The King and I*, calling it "a very beautiful show about nearly nothing. It will be a great hit. But it just doesn't say anything except one spurious thing."

The *Journal* is an intriguing thing. In the form of letters to his editor, it was Steinbeck's way of warming up for writing *East of Eden*, "getting my mental arm in shape to pitch a good game." The letters, on the left-hand pages of a notebook, were sometimes used as "a kind of arguing ground for the story" but more often they were random thoughts which open to us the author's mind and show the nature of the creative process. After warming up with a letter, he would fill the right hand pages of the notebook with the story of *East of Eden*. The *Journal* makes us hungry to see the pages, side by side. As it is published, it is a teasing, enticing part, and we must wait on scholarship to give us the rest of the story. For instance, Steinbeck writes, "There, Pat [his editor], that part is done. And do you think it is good?" Or again, he muses that since the scene he is about to write is "very strange," he will put most of it in dialogue, the best way to make it convincing. Now and then in this edition there is a footnote, but usually we are left to wonder what part of the novel he means. We lose much, therefore, not knowing what his judgment was at such times, and with no way to match ours with his.

But there are fascinating, available parts: his excitement in discovering other translations of the Hebrew word "timshel" ("do thou," "thou shalt," and "thou mayest"), a pivotal discussion in the book. There is his month to month search for a title (he says he was always a poor title man), from *Salinas Valley*, to *My Valley*, to *Valley to the Sea*. Dissatisfied with their provincial ring, he puzzles about for a symbolic title, one that would tie his story in with its root, the Cain and Abel story. *Cain Mark* struck him, until finally three weeks later, after writing in his own hand the sixteen verses of Cain and Abel, he knew he had the one, *East of Eden*.

Perhaps the most revealing part is the way characters come to being, live, become a part of the author. The best example is Cathy. "Cathy Ames is a monster," he introduces her in the *Journal*. Days later he writes, "Cathy is going to start emerging pretty soon now. I hope I can make her believable." After she is in the story, after "warming up" again, he concludes a letter by saying now "I will go back to my dear Cathy." In *The Writer's World* Heller and others discuss what Flaubert meant when he said, "*Madame Bovary, c'est moi.*" Seeing Steinbeck creating his madam, with asides about his own personality ("To that extent I am a monster like Cathy"), we know. And even when Cathy the girl-monster becomes the mature whore, Kate, without a conscience, Steinbeck says, "I think you will find that Cathy as Kate fascinates people though . . . . While she is a monster, she is a little piece of the monster in all of us. It won't be because she is foreign that people will be interested but because she is not." The writer's world, then, becomes our world, lived once more with meaning.

To understand *The Writer's World* one needs to have read widely in modern literature; to appreciate the *Journal*, he needs to know *East of Eden;* and to make much out of Rahv's *Literature and the Sixth Sense* he needs to have read—or be inclined to read—widely in modern literary criticism. The "sixth sense" means, roughly, historical insight, something Rahv complains is all too lacking in modern American criticism; hence, his book of essays spanning three decades is offered as an attempt to restore a proper perspective on those years. Essentially a critic talking to critics about other critics, he gives some insights into the writer's world. But in the main he is busy sparring with other scholars.

Any criticism is risky, of course, but in essays and reviews covering such a long span Rahv reveals the quality of his mind and taste—e.g., when in 1952 he called *The Old Man and the Sea* "actually little more than a fishing anecdote." Even in that essay with the promising title, "Fiction and the Criticism of Fiction," he is so concerned with demolishing colleagues such as Stallman, Ransom, and Schorer that he has precious little to say about fiction. Read together, the essays and reviews surprise by how little they say about the writer's world, and how much they demonstrate the dangers of the critic's world: a penchant for tearing down, a strange lack of generosity, and a temptation to judge artists (as well as other critics) on the basis of vague, absolute ideals about "art" rather than on what the authors say at a given time about the writer's, and our, world.

In *The Writer's World* the authors examine the state of writing as it looms into the future and find it alive and promising—people have always told stories, and always will. Steinbeck agrees: "A strange and mystic business, writing. Almost no progress has taken place since it was invented." And the struggle thrusts somehow toward meaning. Steinbeck has Lee say in East of Eden, " 'No story has power, nor will it last, unless we feel in ourselves that it is true and true of us.' " Even as he wrote this, he knew some would disagree, for he added in the *Journal*, "I have noticed so many of the reviews of my work show a fear and a hatred of ideas and speculations." But meaning, perhaps, is what it's all about, and the struggle down the writer's yellow brick road may be an effort to bridge the gap between our world of events and the world of vision so that we can feel in ourselves some hope, some truth. The writer's world, the world we readers delight to enter, is where that bridge is continually being built.

—*Walter R. McDonald*

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THEATRE JOURNAL

Taking the Plunge: English Theater in 1970

Just before I left for England, for a first visit in twenty years, a friend of mine wrote that he envied me my plunge into English theater. A few days after I arrived in London, when I told an English-based friend that I had been to see *Widowers' Houses* at the Royal Court, he said, "I wondered when you'd dip into the theater." The implication is that there is a vast and presumably refreshing theatrical ocean in England and that I had somehow been deprived (or deprived myself) in not having got wet since 1949. A month and fourteen plays later, I was prepared to admit that I will probably not wait another twenty years to go back to England but that it was not all that bracing.

I should have guessed. As a drama critic, I am used to facing celebrated English imports, like the ramshackle *Hadrian VII* or the ludicrous Nicol Williamson *Hamlet*. As a teacher of contemporary drama, I am aware that not every new English playwright is as intriguing as Harold Pinter or John Arden. Still, I was in England on a holiday, there to revel in the theater not to judge it. And there is a certain obvious pleasure in the ease with which one can go to the theater in London. Except for the National Theatre productions like *The Beaux' Stratagem* and Laurence Olivier's *The Merchant of Venice*, one can walk into most theaters a few minutes before the curtain goes up or, play it safe, by making telephone reservations. It is comparatively inexpensive, at least for an American visitor; on an English salary, I might not go to so many plays in so short a time. Everything conspired to make the theatrical debauch a happy one, which it was, but that is not quite the same as assuming that the eye of the beholder remained unjaundiced.

Let's begin with the revivals. At any moment, London is full of plays from the English past, mounted by eminent companies whose chief job is to keep the repertory alive, or put together by conventional managements which hope to cash in on all-star casts. Which means, inevitably, plenty of Shakespeare. For me, the best of the bard, unfortunately, was *Love's Labour's Lost* at the Old Vic, the only National Theatre production I managed to see. It is an almost impossible play, burdened with standard Renaissance comic types that only master comedians can save, and weighted down with the kind of artificial wit that must have sent the groundlings up the wall. In directing the production, Olivier accepted the play for what it is and, with the help of Carl Toms, who did the costumes, turned it into a visual experience. In scene after scene, he placed the characters as though they were so many points in an abstract design and emphasized the pattern by color modulations as one costume shaded into the next. It was a pretty production and, despite the presence of performers like Joan Plowright (Rosaline) and Paul Curran (Holofernes), as bloodless as the play deserves. I came away from the Old Vic impressed by the ingenuity of the company and, as always, impatient with the play itself.

Still, that is a decided step ahead of the other Shakespeare I saw, which either bored or actively annoyed me. I went out to the Mermaid Theatre at Puddle Dock to see the theater as well as to see *Henry IV, Part II*. A great many traveling colleagues had advised me to dine in the theater restaurant which fronts on the river; once again, I was impressed with the visitor's power of self-hypnosis. Although the theater is pleasant and the food rather good, only a pre-sold enthusiast for whom looking across the Thames into Southwark has historical connotations could find charm in all those warehouses. The view inside was even more barren. Someone—presumably Ron Pember, who directed both parts of *Henry IV* for the Mermaid—decided that much would be gained if the play was put on as though "by a band of strolling players in a barn somewhere in central England during the latter part of the 18th century." What this device gave us was a chance to see the actors who doubled in small rôles change clothes (which was seldom the same as changing character) and an on-stage audience of yokels who overresponded to each scene, thus killing any effect that it might have had on the real audience. Even without this gimmick, the production would have been unfortunate. Sensibly enough, Pember decided to play for the death, decay, and dissolution in the script, but the method was self-defeating. Despite some cute invention (casting a dwarf as Falstaff's page and dressing him like a miniature Sir John), the production was dangerously slow and Bernard Miles's Falstaff was too deliberate, gently contemplative, a lecture on Falstaff as archetype. Only George Benson's Shallow broke the even, dull surface of the production. I was never tempted to go back for *Part I*.

Out at Stratford, the Royal Shakespeare Company was being outrageous in *Richard III* and *Measure for Measure*, and I wish they had not bothered. It is six years and several managements since they did *Marat/Sade*, but the company looks as though it will never shake that experience. Every performer had found a tic of his own and used it

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signature) **Robley Wilson, Jr., Editor**

pushily whenever he was on stage—disruptive private ventures that helped muddle productions that were already sick of too much Kott. I can imagine *Richard III* as good black comedy and I can accept the childishness in the king, but to play him as Dennis the Menace, as Norman Rodway did, is to sacrifice the play to an idea. Even had the central characterization been less foolish, the play would have disappeared because director Terry Hands, fashionably attached to a misreading of the theater of cruelty, staged scene after scene with little attention to the lines or the political implications of the action. An example: to secure his position, Richard must persuade the Lord Mayor and his followers that he is the true king; Hands turned the scene into a slapstick beating of the Lord Mayor, a touch of Brechtian farce, which made the need for persuasion—and hence the scene—completely pointless. *Measure for Measure* was more conventional (although no Angelo I can imagine would stroke Isabella's crotch at their second meeting) and more tiresome. One reason was that John Kane, as Pompey, and his fellow comics played the low-life sequences as though they had read the scholarly footnotes on Elizabethan naughtiness. I found myself recalling Hiram Sherman in the 1957 production at the Phoenix Theater, a funny, corrupt Pompey, who one could believe was really in the flesh trade. The Stratford *Measure* gave no strong sense of the pattern of corruption in Vienna, but it did manage to convey what a monster the good old Duke is. I am not sure, however, that they intended him to be quite so garrulous a bore as he became in Sebastian Shaw's hands.

The non-Shakespearean revivals were much more interesting. *Widowers' Houses*, which had moved up from the Nottingham Playhouse, was an amusingly solid reading of Shaw's play with a Blanche terrifying enough to make a proper hash of the ostensible happy ending. Too terrifying, perhaps, for in her attempt to show how awful the character really is, Nicola Pagett somehow forgot that the girl has to be conventionally charming as well. The best of the revivals, and one of the best productions I saw in London, was *The Magistrate*, the Arthur Wing Pinero farce that had moved up from last summer's Chichester Festival to become a West End hit. Alastair Sim is justly celebrated in the leading rôle, although occasionally, for my taste, he milked a line or a gesture about ten minutes longer than he should have. Still, those bits of self-indulgence came when he was alone on stage, took nothing from the other performers, for the real virtue of *The Magistrate* was that it was marvelously all of a piece. Patricia Routledge turned on stage with such comic authority and Robert Coote conveyed British-raj rectitude so perfectly that their performances, like Sim's, would have been a pleasure under any circumstances; all the more so in a production in which John Clements manipulated an excellent cast to capture every farcical nuance. Pinero never looked so good.

Chichester was less happy this year, at least in *Peer Gynt*, its first production. The theater itself was not as new to me as my stranger status might have suggested since I had seen variations on it in Stratford, Ontario, and Minneapolis—happier ones, I might add, since there is something oddly somber about the Chichester version of the standard Guthrie-Moiseiwitsch three-sided thrust stage. I was vaguely disoriented by the presence of William Hutt, over from Canada for the season, not at all sure what drama festival I was at, but once the play began I was quite certain that I was not in Ibsen country. Christopher Fry had decided to rewrite the original, moving scenes around to suit his own unlikely interpretation in which the whole thing turns out to be imaginary. Roy Dotrice's Peer was cousin to Bernard Miles's Falstaff, a bundle of ruminative self-analysis. Dotrice, who may have played John Aubrey too long, was possible as the aged Peer, but his young man lacked exuberance and the headlong rush of self-delusion that keeps Ibsen's character shifting and changing line by line. A wonderfully exciting play had

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turned tepid and pastel. In retrospect, the strange, knockabout *Peer* that Gerald Freedman did in Central Park in 1969 seemed very attractive; it was awful part of the time, but at least it was alive.

* * *

The structure of this article reflects the pattern of my English play-going. My first instinct was to rush to the revivals, history's pre-sold goods, but I pulled myself up short after a few disappointments and turned to the contemporary drama. A theater, after all, is only as alive as its playwrights. As it happens, there really was not too much to choose from. Among the older young playwrights, those post-war angry young men, only Arnold Wesker was in residence. His newest play, *The Friends*, opened at the Roundhouse, the most recent attempt to establish that there is a gulf between the West End and the serious drama (even though much of the stuff in the West End moves there from one of the "serious" theaters). Wesker's play is about a group of aging young people, most of them working-class types down from the North, who spend two acts watching the most vital of them die, while they discuss their failure. A band of late-blooming William Morrises, they had hoped to start a revolution in taste which would reach their own parents and succeeded only in establishing fashionable boutiques for middle-class children. The play, which ends by affirming life over death, was stultifyingly tiresome, interesting only as Wesker's confession that Centre 42 and his other attempts to reach a working-class audience have proved ineffective. The play had one strike on it before it ever began because Wesker unwisely printed a long "I believe" message in the program, maudlin enough to presage what was to come.

Among the younger young playwrights, I saw samples of the work of David Mercer and David Storey. On the evidence of *Flint*, Mercer need not be taken too seriously. A change from the playwright's more earnest social dramas, *Flint* is the story of a septuagenarian Anglican clergyman, a lusty, bike-riding atheist who runs away with a pregnant teenager and dies in a burst of flame. It was a pleasure to watch William Hordern in the title rôle, but the play itself is pretty much nonsense, pieced together out of old melodrama and cartoon satire. The artificiality of these sources was emphasized by the rest of the performances, particularly that of Vivien Merchant as Flint's crazy sister-in-law. I suspect Mercer of intending a social comment of some kind.

Storey is something else again and the happiest news I found in England. Known in the United States only as the author of *This Sporting Life*, both the novel and the screenplay, Storey turned playwright in 1967. I was lucky enough to see two of his four plays. At the Salisbury Playhouse, where the troupe was really too young to do justice to his older characters, I saw *In Celebration*. This is a family play in which the three sons come home to help their parents celebrate their anniversary and manage to ventilate all the family grievances before the night is finished. It would be easy to find fault with the play, but it does have the virtue of vivid if stereotypical characters and a strong sense of the interaction among people (hence, happily, among actors on stage). *The Contractor* is an even better play than *In Celebration*. In one sense, it is a gimmick play in which a group of workmen spend two acts putting up a tent for an outdoor wedding and a final act taking it down. Such mechanical business might turn out to be no more than a stage designer's triumph, like the oil well scene in *Wildcat*, but Lindsay Anderson, who directed the production both at the Royal Court and for its commercial run, kept the tent-building in place. As the tent grew, step by deliberate step, the workers and the family for whom it was being built (that of the contractor, the tent-maker himself) were exposed to one another and to us. There are mouthpiece characters in both plays—the lawyer son in *In Celebration*, an Irish workman in *The Contractor*—who attack the obvious horrors of contemporary life, but—although Storey probably accepts the denunciations—he never allows the

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ROBERT HUFF

THE PACT

In the tent on
Robert Creeley's
lawn is really
close to aging
neatly in clean
skins fresh from the
Frigidaire, yet
on occasion,
because there are
women in there,
the window is
opened and we
are invited
to be ourselves
even before
sea and mountain
but never al-
lowed to make war.

denouncers to split the plays open. They are forced to play their part in the celebratory rituals that sustain life, perhaps by disguising its worst faces. The implications of Storey's plays are somewhat uncertain. Each ends in acceptance, which reached me in the audience as a positive sign, but given the context in each case such acceptance may be intended as a loss. That there is something to worry over in the two plays, and that one should want to, is already an indication that they are something special. Perhaps more important for the sake of the theater, they are dramatic creations in which the apparently random talk, often very funny, builds a stage reality unhappily absent in either Wesker's meditations or Mercer's flamboyance.

Having made my bow to the serious theater, I turned to the West End at its purest, popular theater in several genres. Made a half turn actually, since I stopped short of the Brian Rix farce *(She's Done It Again!)* and the Danny La Rue drag show, both of which would probably have proved superior to the merchandise I did sample. John Mortimer's *Come As Your Are!*, for example. A collection of four plays, each identified by the section of London in which it takes place, Mortimer's offering is one of those familiar trying *tours de force* in which three performers, two well known on Broadway (Glynis Johns, Denholm Elliott), display their virtuosity. The plays are so bland and the characters so simple that they could not tax the talent of an amateur. The evening did manage to remove the bad taste that Neil Simon had left in my mouth because, by comparison, *Plaza Suite* suddenly acquired depth.

Barry England's *Conduct Unbecoming* may not belong with this group of plays since it moved up to London from the Bristol Old Vic and since it tries, now and again, to score serious points. It is so relentlessly a something-for-everyone play, however, that it seems closer in spirit to a movie like *The Lives of the Bengal Lancers* than to the exposé it occasionally wants to be. It is a courtroom play, a genre that all audiences (excluding me) are supposed to love on principle. It is a psychological drama with a grotesque twist, a distant relative of Jekyll and Hyde. It is a costume drama full of regimental punctilio and carefully-fitted red coats. It is a standard maturation play in which the decadent, rebellious young man comes to love the regiment and his gung-ho colleague learns that personal integrity is more important than that regiment's reputation. The first of these two conversions and the solving of the not very mysterious mystery in the Jekyll-Hyde story serve to exorcise the one idea (that the system makes brutes of men) which haunts the play for most of its three acts. It is, finally, a well-acted piece of fluff. Predictably, it has just been welcomed to Broadway.

Last, and probably least, I went to an English musical—*Sing a Rude Song*, in which Barbara Windsor was supposed to be playing Marie Lloyd. I have been in love with Miss Windsor since she came to Philadelphia in *Oh, What a Lovely War*, a passion that was confirmed when I finally caught up with her first movie, *Sparrows Can't Sing*. Now, alas, her charm is a little too calculated, probably as a result of all those *Carry on . . .* films, but it is still a pleasure to watch her work. Given Miss Windsor, then, and Miss Lloyd, whom that old possum, Mr. Eliot, called "the greatest music-hall artist of her time," *Sing a Rude Song* should not have been the bomb it turned out to be. Unfortunately, the music was nondescript and the book was actively bad. It told the story of the performer who failed at love only to discover that her real romance was with her public. The last time I saw that show it was called *Sophie* and was as much an insult to Miss Tucker as this one is to Miss Lloyd. Someday, a writer is going to discover that no one cares a damn about the private life of actors except as a subject for gossip, concentrate on the performer as professional, and turn out a show worth seeing. When that happens, Miss Windsor will no more be asked to play Miss Lloyd than Miss Streisand to play Miss Brice, for strong theatrical personalities can only impose their alien styles on the characters they play.

* * *

By the time I got to my typewriter, some of these shows had closed, new ones had opened. Yet, I cannot believe that the London theatrical scene experienced any remarkable change. Not exactly an up-to-the-minute report, this article is probably a fair account—given my idiosyncrasies—of the variety and quality available to the theater-goer in London during any specimen month.

It was a useful visit for me. Every fall, I face the coming theatrical season with hope and enthusiasm. Every spring, I look back in disappointment. This years, thanks to my English plunge, I did not feel quite so despondent about the theater in New York. There's life in the old girl yet.

—*Gerald Weales*

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